

INDEPENDENT

No 2,847

50p

(Republic of Ireland 65p)

Clinton puts the heat on Adams

IAN MURDOCH

and PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES

President Bill Clinton leaves today after a visit that has given a boost to the Ulster peace and put Sinn Féin under pressure. As he departs, 80,000 in the British and Irish parades to mark the 10th anniversary of the 'twelve' talks will be held.

Mr Clinton's visit to Northern Ireland was a landmark moment in the peace process. He called on the Irish people to stand firm alongside Premier John Bruton as he took the necessary risks in the search for peace. He later toasted his success with a glass of Irish stout in a Dublin pub bearing his mother's maiden name, Cassidy. He praised the two Governments' twin-track initiative as "a brilliant formulation which permits people to go forward without giving up any of the things they believe in and have to have. I am inclined to believe it will succeed. The lesson of the past 15 months is that people like peace. They want it to go forward not backwards."

The Clintons arrival in Dublin yesterday drew huge crowds and, following his momentous visit to Londonderry and Belfast, sealed a personal political triumph. He delivered a passionate plea for a lasting solution to the troubles and an end to bloodshed.

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John Major yesterday acclaimed Mr Clinton's trip as giving a "huge boost" to the cause of peace. "Can anyone who witnessed President Clinton's remarkable visit to Northern Ireland seriously contemplate a return to bombing and shooting?" the Prime Minister told the Conservative Women's conference in Westminster.

Mr Bruton admitted the president's visit to Britain and Ireland created the opportunity for London and Dublin to reach a breakthrough.

His endorsement came as the membership was announced of the new international body. As expected, it was chaired by former US Secretary of State George Mitchell, 62, and the two will be the chief of the Canadian armed forces and Mr Harri Holkeri, Finland's premier from 1991.

Doctor in the House as university honours Blair



Legal eagle: Labour leader Tony Blair receiving an honorary doctorate in civil law at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle. Photograph: Reuters

City frenzy over 'cure for cancer'

TOM STEVENSON and TOM WILKIE

The City has whipped itself into a frenzy in the belief it can cash in on the holy grail of medical research - a cure for cancer. In their scramble not to miss out on the billions to be made from a cure, investors are brushing aside warnings from the medical establishment that it is too early to tell if a breakthrough has been made.

In spite of caution from researchers and clinicians, shares in an almost unknown company, British Biotech, have nearly doubled in value in two days. One buyer was said to have paid £25 a share, five times what British Biotech's shares fetched just a couple of months ago.

British Biotech, an Oxford-

based research company with a raft of potential therapies for cancer and arthritis, has only reported "positive interim findings" from clinical trials of the new drug Marimastat, involving 94 patients in advanced stages of cancers in the lower bowel, ovaries, prostate and pancreas. There was some evidence that tumours may have shrunk in about one-third of patients.

Hectic dealing in British Biotech shares put a value of more than £800m on the company in spite of the fact that it has never made a profit. Share dealers shrugged off a £10m loss on Thursday morning to send the stock soaring from £10 a share to £16.75 last night.

Analysts were finding it hard to contain their enthusiasm for the company, which triggered

the City's buying binge on Thursday by publishing a set of promising results from tests.

One said: "The share price has huge potential. It could be bigger than Glaxo in the 1980s."

From modest research beginnings, Glaxo grew to become Britain's largest company, worth more than £30bn, mainly because of the success of just one treatment, the Zantac anti-ulcer drug. Earlier this year, Glaxo launched an unprecedented £9bn hostile bid for Wellcome, maker of the AIDS drug Zidovudine.

But senior cancer researchers and clinicians greeted with scepticism claims that the new drug could be a billion-pound cancer cure. Professor Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "I'd

doubt it, based on the results so far. There's no way you can say that on 94 patients."

Marimastat is scientifically interesting because it acts against a different target compared to existing cancer drugs, according to Dr Fran Balkwill, a principal scientist with the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. It also has the advantage that it can be taken orally, at home, rather than injected in hospital. But Dr Balkwill added: "We must be extremely careful not to raise false hopes. This is an early first step along a very long path. It does something, but whether it will benefit patients in the long term - we cannot say that this is a new cure for cancer."

Ann Barrett, Professor of Oncology at Glasgow University, said: "It is too early to say

from these results if it helps patients and there is reason to be sceptical because often good effects in phase two trials are not borne out in phase three."

Prof McVie said preliminary results were encouraging and spoke highly of British Biotech's expertise. The company has not yet compared the drug's action against existing treatments: that will come with phase three - randomised trials involving large numbers of patients to assess if the drug does improve on current therapies.

Shares scramble, page 4

Is for jail after on two counts

Today all aspects of the case were completed in the court. His defence counsel, the authorisation of the case "on a return."

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trading activities and with deceiving Simex, the Singapore International Monetary Exchange, and persuading it to release more than £76m.

Mr Koh said Leeson was sorry, and "contrary to speculation, there are no secret profits. Our client has no assets." Proceeds from a £450,000 book deal for his memoirs "will go to the agent, the ghostwriter, English and German lawyers and Singapore counsel". Mr Koh revealed that Leeson's wife, Lisa, suffered a miscarriage at the end of January.

Leeson has apologised for casting any doubt on Singapore's legal system.

Leeson points finger, page 5

BSkyB faces inquiry into 'monopoly' on sport and films

MATHEW HORSMAN Media Editor

UK competition authorities yesterday struck at one of Rupert Murdoch's most lucrative operations, vowing a wide-ranging inquiry into the activities of the satellite broadcaster BSkyB.

The move by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) was heralded by smaller cable companies, which have led a loud and public campaign aimed at convincing regulators in the UK and in Brussels to rein in BSkyB, the nation's most profitable television broadcaster, and 40 per cent owned by Mr Murdoch's News Corporation.

At stake are BSkyB's supply

arrangements with the cable industry, under which 28 TV channels, including Sky Sports and Sky Movies, are distributed wholesale at prices set by BSkyB. Small cable operators complain that the company's near-monopoly on film and sport for pay-TV, as well as its control of conditional access technology used to scramble and unscramble television signals, constitute an abuse of a dominant position.

BSkyB chief executive Sam Chisholm promised full co-operation with the inquiry, but sharply criticised the complaining operators, suggesting they were using the regulatory process to further their business,

rather than competing in the market place.

The OFT said yesterday it would also look at BSkyB's exclusive deals to broadcast sport, to determine whether they should be referred to the Restrictive Practices Court. Under an agreement with the Premier League, BSkyB has the right to match any price for television rights offered by competitors.

The Premier League has received legal advice that the clause is not enforceable. BSkyB countered that the clause was introduced at the request of the Premier League when the current £304m contract, due to expire in 1997, was signed three-and-a-half years ago.

Epic manuscript sold for £276,000

ARE GARNER

original handwritten manuscript of Erich M Remarque's noted anti-war novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, was sold for £276,000 at Sotheby's.

The document had only been known to exist after decades in the attic of the author's first wife's family. It includes a pre-war episode ini-

tially written for the opening of the novel, which caused a sensation when it was first published in 1929.

The manuscript was bought by Julia Rosenthal, an international dealer acting on behalf of a German buyer in Osnabruck, Remarque's birthplace.

Ms Rosenthal, who is based in Oxford, said after the sale: "This is a key work of the 20th century and it is particularly fitting that it should have come to light in a year when attention is

so focused on war. The appearance of this manuscript will enable the definitive text of the novel to be established. It is a dream of a manuscript."

Dr Susan Wharton, Sotheby's expert in continental manuscripts, said: "The existence of this text was unsuspected until very recently."

"Its appearance is a literary event of major importance and we are very pleased with the price it realised."

The novel recounts the ex-

periences of a young private in the trenches in the First World War, and depicts the horrors in a stark, realistic style. It was one of the books burnt publicly by the Nazis in Berlin in 1933, and Remarque himself remained *persona non grata* in Germany for another 50 years. It has been translated into 45 languages and sold an estimated 50 million copies world-wide.

Giuseppe Verdi's working manuscript for *Otello* fetched £188,500 at the same auction.

MORE
INDEPENDENT
ON SATURDAY

MAGAZINE

Dulwich College, the school that lost its head

Frank Sinatra: bad attitude at 80

The guilty world of second-hand couture

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A city confers its freedom on the president



Local colour: President Bill Clinton samples the stout in Cassidy's bar in Dublin yesterday

Alan Murdoch sees the President and Hillary receive a rousing reception

President Bill Clinton received a rousing reception in Dublin yesterday when he arrived in the city to receive the Freedom of the City.

Some 100,000 people were gathered in the city to welcome the President and his wife, Hillary.

Mr Clinton and Mrs Clinton arrived in Dublin yesterday afternoon and were met by a large crowd of people.

After the charged euphoria of London, the welcome outside Trinity College was relaxed and festive.

After Irish musicians warmed up the young crowd, Mr Clinton appeared to a huge roar, singing the Army band and a set of Stars and Stripes.

The President and his wife were then taken to the city of Dublin to receive the Freedom of the City.

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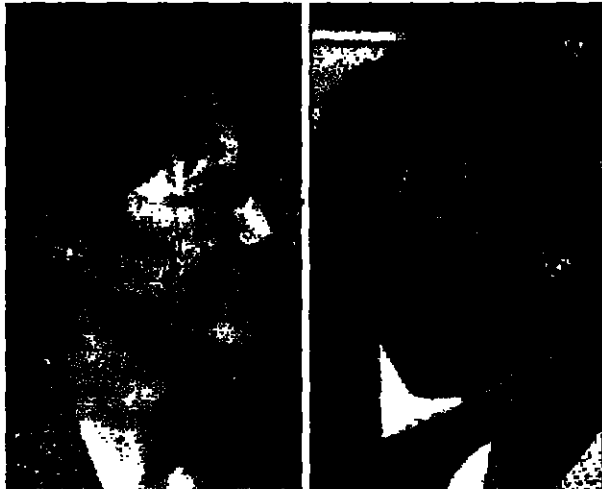
Bhagwan women jailed for five years over US murder plot

DAVID USBORNE
Portland, Oregon

United States judge yesterday sentenced two British women to five years in prison each for conspiring to murder the US Attorney General for the state of Oregon while members of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh "free-love" cult 10 years ago.

The two women, Sally-Anne Croft, 45, and Susan Hagan, 48, were convicted four months ago by an Oregon jury of helping to hatch a plot at the Bhagwan's sprawling compound in the centre of the state, known as "Rancho Rajneesh", to assassinate the then federal Attorney General, Charles Turner.

The sentence, delivered by Judge Malcolm Marsh in an emotional hearing in court, was considerably more lenient than most had expected. Technically, the pair could have been imprisoned for life, although that was never thought likely. Both women will be able to seek pa-



Treated leniently: Susan Hagan, left, and Sally-Anne Croft, sentenced yesterday after five-year legal battle

role after serving just one-third of their sentences but can expect to serve two-thirds. They will begin their sentences next month, probably in a low-security camp

Marsh indicated he still had not decided finally on the length of the sentences. He said that while the crime committed was "most serious indeed" he had been swayed by some 50 letters of support sent to the court by friends and supporters of the women since their conviction.

"I do have a sense from the letters I have received of support that the defendants have confronted and have considered what they were involved in and I sense they believe that it is something that they would have better have avoided," the judge concluded.

Hagan thanked the judge for allowing her to stay free pending the sentencing. In recent weeks she has been working on an AIDS project. "Your generosity in allowing me to stay out on bail has allowed me in some small way to give back to the community," she said.

Yesterday marked the climax of five years of legal battles for the two women. They

had returned to Britain in 1985 after abandoning the cult shortly before it fell apart and the white-bearded Bhagwan, famed for his fleet of 94 Rolls Royces, fled to his native India, where he later died.

When the US government revealed in 1990 that it was seeking to extradite the women in 1990 to stand trial in Oregon, they earned the support of several high-profile British figures, including MPs such as Tony Blair and Paddy Ashdown. The extradition request was finally granted by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, in 1994.

The assassination plan arose because Mr Turner was leading a grand jury inquiry into allegations of mass immigration fraud on Rancho Rajneesh. The ranch's inner circle, which included both Croft and Hagan, were apparently concerned that his investigations threatened the continued existence of the cult and had to be stopped.

Lottery blamed as charity slashes spending by

REBECCA FOWLER

Save the Children - one of Britain's largest charities - yesterday announced sweeping £9m cuts to its projects across the world because of a continuing fall in its income, which it believes has been compounded by the effect of the National Lottery.

The charity, which funds projects in 50 countries and whose president is the Princess Royal, is to cut its £91m overall budget by 10 per cent April 1997.

"It's a very tough fund-raising climate anyway, and half of our income is from voluntary contributions, which is under pressure," said Don Redding, a spokesman for Save the Children.

"People feel they don't have much money in their pockets, and they're not going to have much money coming in in the future."

"When you add the lottery to

that, it's a significant new pressure that adds to the problem."

The cuts will result in job losses and the closure of projects, including family centres and schemes for young people leaving care in Britain. The 80 British projects supported by Save the Children will not escape unscathed.

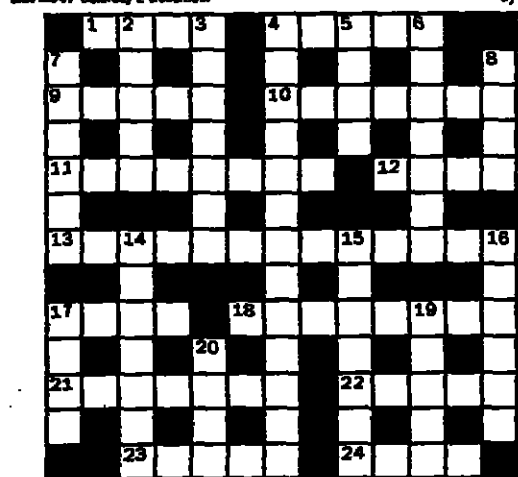
It is not the first funding crisis the charity has faced. Last year, it announced it was cutting £30m from its budget over four years as a result of the decline in fund-raising.

In a statement issued yesterday the charity said: "In the changed world of the Nineties we have found ourselves trapped between massively increasing demands around the world as children become poorer, more exploited, and a recession which has affected every pocket at home."

Camelot, the National Lottery operator, denied it was

concise crossword

No. 2867 Saturday 2 December By Miss



- ACROSS**
- Years for (4)
 - Gone (5)
 - Jets (5)
 - Object (7)
 - Underlying (8)
 - Blind (4)
 - Wrote by exposure (7-6)
 - Young house (4)
 - Upright (8)
 - Availing settlement (7)
 - Spanish island (5)
 - Prevent (5)
 - Power (4)
- DOWN**
- Bury (5)
 - A narcotic (7)
 - Bower (13)
 - Rooster (4)
 - Extract (7)
 - Type of puzzle (6)
 - Name (anag) (4)
 - Participant (7)
 - Famous seaman (6)
 - Shoulder-ear (4)
 - Felony (5)
 - Mellow (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 1 (Miles), 3 (Rams), 5 (Narcosis), 7 (Kilobits), 8 (Edge), 9 (Key signature), 10 (Ad-
dress), 12 (Curtain), 14 (Queen), 15 (Jazz), 16 (Shore), 17 (Alibi), 18 (Rope), 19 (Dance),
20 (Nude), 21 (Waltz), 22 (Isle), 23 (Singer), 24 (Deride), 25 (Utah), 26 (Com-
bat), 27 (Landing), 28 (Tomb), 29 (Jew), 30 (Eater).

THE WEATHER

NOON FORECAST



High 10 to 12, low 5 to 7, wind light to moderate, rain in the north and west.

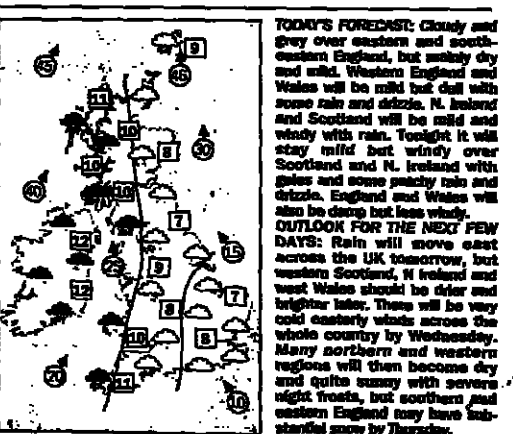
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Manchester	9-11	Light	Partly cloudy
Birmingham	10-12	Light	Partly cloudy
Cardiff	9-11	Light	Partly cloudy
Belfast	10-12	Light	Partly cloudy
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Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 20p per min (plus 40p per min for calls from mobile phones).



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and a people rejoice in the spirit of peace



Irish welcome: Top left, schoolgirls rush to greet the President in the Falls Road, Belfast; below left, RUC officers keep the crowds back in west Belfast; main picture, the presidential car tours east Belfast

Photographs: AP/Reuters/John V /005

There might not have been quite so many people in Dublin's College Green had we not seen the huge party that turned out for Bill Clinton in Belfast and Londonderry. The Dubs will not be outdone.

The rain lifted from the skies when Air Force one approached Dublin Airport and Ireland's most popular radio show hosted by Gay Byrne urged the listeners to go out and give the man a proper welcome.

Stop complaining about the traffic restriction and the roads being closed off, stop belly-aching about the hundreds of secret service men in mackintoshes speaking into their wrists and peering through sunglasses for terrorists on the roofs of what we know to be perfectly blameless buildings. Go in there, show the man that we

appreciate that he's doing something for peace.

The President met the leaders in the government Buildings while Hillary Rodham Carter spoke to an invited audience of Irish women in Ireland's national Gallery.

Standing under the famous Daniel Maclise painting "The Marriage of Strongbow and

Aoife" the 12th Century liaison that cemented the whole unfortunate and confused relationship between the two islands, the wife of the President of America urged the women of Ireland to be courageous in carrying out all the hopes and dreams of these days; the work of peace was too important to be left to the elected leaders.

And then it came to the bit that the people of Dublin could join in, the part where the President was made the 63d Freeman of Dublin City.

Standing in front of the magnificent building that once held the parliament of a united Ireland and Britain for a few short years at the end of the eighteenth century, Bill Clinton

faced his public. There were thousands and thousands there, office workers on very long lunch-times, families from the suburbs who had brought children in by bus and train to see a bit of history. They said to each other that he was taller, and greyer and better-looking than he looked on television. He could have stayed for

ever and ever, his face so familiar suddenly relocated in familiar streets was heavy.

But there were huge other things like a pint of Guinness in Cassidy's pub and an address to both Houses of the Irish Parliament, a state banquet, he couldn't stay all that making jokes with dubs and waving to their children.

Did they like him? Almost certainly and universally yes. The average Dubliner is cynical but not as they went home from the Friday afternoon in the fresh air.

A man taking his children home by the hand through the happy streets gave the man his due. He sees himself as a peace-maker, and don't we need those badly?

Maeve Binchy is a columnist for the Irish Times

Maeve Binchy, the novelist, finds joy on the streets of Dublin and hope in Irish hearts

First Lady lambasted over 'pointless women's meeting'

VICKY WARD

At the start of the President's European tour, Hillary Clinton told the 22 distinguished women who had coffee with her in the plush environs of the US ambassador's dining room on Wednesday morning that the only way to deal with criticism is not to take it personally. "Women spend too much time worrying about other people's approval and not whether or not they approve of themselves," she said. Hours later she needed to put those words into practice.

Mrs Clinton's London coffee morning was not deemed a

success either by most of the women "delegates" chosen to attend it or the right-wing British press who gave it almost as much critical press attention as her husband's speech on the Irish peace process to Westminster. The *Daily Mail*, which even devoted a leader to the subject, are indignant at the selection of what they see as an unrepresentative bunch of lefties to exchange views on women's issues.

The guests, who included the *Independent's* associate editor Polly Ryndes, Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, Baroness Blackstone, Labour's foreign Affairs

spokeswoman in the Lords, and Georgia Henry, deputy editor of the *Guardian*, were unsure as to who had actually chosen them, or indeed why. Most were rung by US Embassy staff only the night before, and the maximum notice was 48 hours.

Some, like Lola Bubbosh, the deputy editor of the *Literary Review*, thought there must be some mistake when they were told Mrs Clinton wanted to canvas the opinions of British women on British women's issues - Ms Bubbosh is American.

There was no written format to the meeting, and no obvious chair. After Mrs Clinton had met everybody individually - she

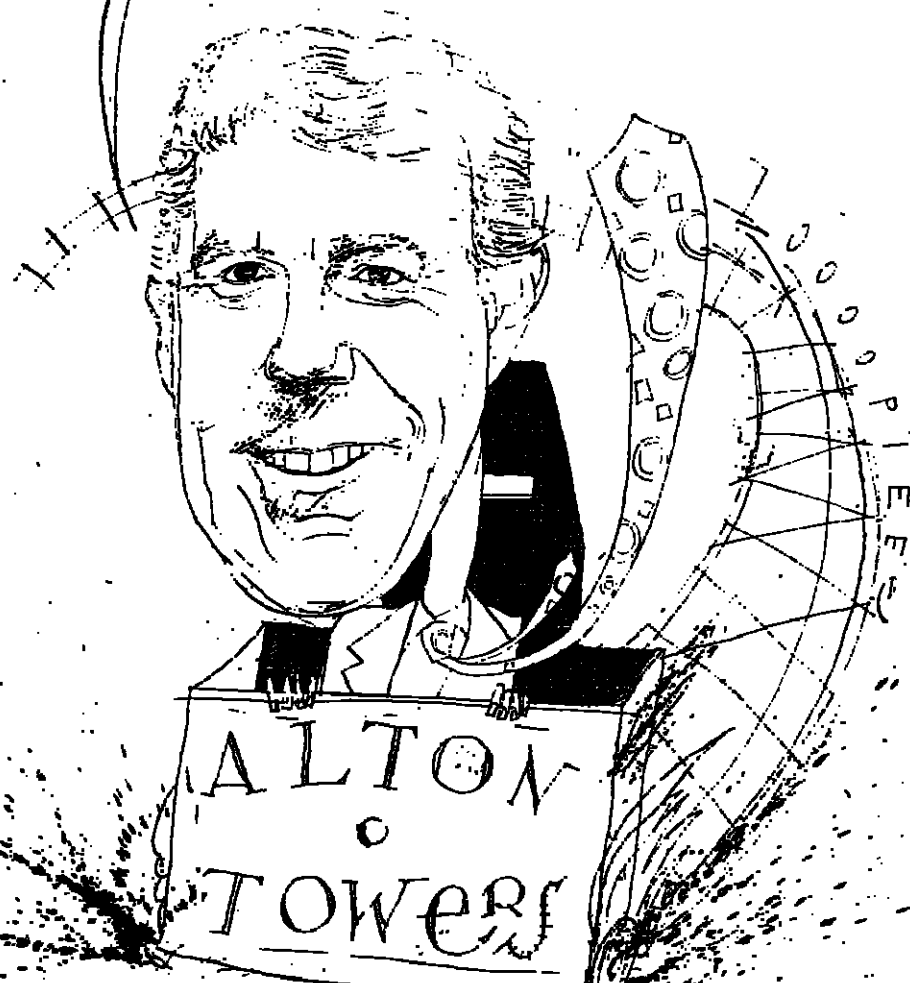
was introduced to Mrs Shephard first and, after enquiring what she did, commented: "That must be an important job." - Baroness Blackstone kicked off the discussion. Mrs Clinton said little throughout, "but" says one source "she nodded a lot".

Not all of Mrs Clinton's guests saw the point, however. "Most meetings end up with some agenda of some kind, some purpose," said one unattributedly. "But none of us knew where this discussion was going."

A spokesman for Mrs Clinton said the First Lady "does this every time she goes abroad and there is time".

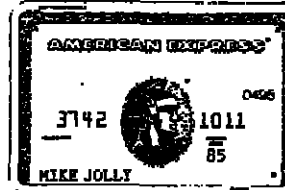
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In the Sunday Review

Kids' stuff: fashion for the under-fives

Star wars: the astrologers' battle to succeed Patric Walker

In Real Life

Ben Thompson meets Patsy Kensit

No laughing matter: women comics and anti-men jokes

What to buy her? Best books for Christmas



news

Medical breakthrough: Company's fresh approach to treatment of disease stirs interest of scientists and City

New drug offers hope for cancer sufferers

TOM WILKIE
Science Editor

The most effective cure for cancer is the surgeon's knife. A combination of surgery and radiotherapy ranks second in terms of effectiveness while chemotherapy – anti-cancer drugs – accounts for comparatively few cancer cures.

But surgery is effective only if the cancer cells have not spread around the body from the original tumour, in a process known as metastasis. Once a cancer has metastasised, then the prognosis is bleak.

It is here, in preventing tumours from metastasising, that British Biotech's new drug, Marimastat, offers most hope. Dr Fran Balkwill, principal scientist at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, said: "The long-term dream of this treatment is that you live with your cancer – you keep taking a pill and it doesn't spread. If your cancer is not spreading anywhere and not disrupting any vital function then it doesn't matter so much."

Dr Balkwill emphasised that while "it is very interesting scientifically, these are very early data. We can't say this is a new cure for cancer."

According to Ann Barrett, professor of oncology at Glasgow University, "although overall, chemotherapy contributes in only a relatively small way to cures in cancer, a drug that could stop metastasis would be of interest and could be used in conjunction with the effective local treatments we do have – surgery and radiotherapy". Professor Barrett also emphasised that "it is too early to assess if these drugs are going to be useful in clinical practice".

Marimastat's other significant potential benefit to patients would be that it can be taken orally, possibly at home, rather than having to be injected in hospital. It also appears to have

less awful side-effects than existing anti-cancer therapies.

Current anti-cancer drugs attack and kill fast dividing cells. Tumour cells grow quickly, but so does hair and the cells lining the gut – which is why people feel nauseated and sometimes their hair falls out during chemotherapy.

Professor Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said Marimastat is "an interesting drug because it's got a new target". The drug obstructs powerful enzymes associated with tumours – matrix metalloproteinases.

Dr Balkwill said that in epithelial cancers – for example those located on the lining of the gut wall – there is a thin wall of collagen that can prevent the tumour spreading but these enzymes are breaking it down. If the tumour is to spread, it needs these matrix metalloproteinases and other enzymes to get into the blood and circulate.

By concentrating on the body's mechanisms for containing the cancer rather than on killing tumour cells, Marimastat "has a completely different line of attack", Dr Balkwill said.

British Biotech reported interim results on clinical trials of 94 patients with advanced colorectal, pancreatic, ovarian and prostate cancer. The company did not measure tumour shrinkage directly, instead it used a surrogate measure – the concentration of "cancer antigens" in the patients' bloodstream.

In 33 per cent of those taking the drug for 28 days, levels of antigen either fell or were stable. In a further 26 per cent of patients the levels rose but much less quickly than before treatment started.

The company's research and development director, Dr Peter Lewis, said the tests needed to be completed before Marimastat was made available outside the company's trial programme.



Trial run: Pills being tested for dissolution at British Biotech's laboratory in Oxford

Photograph: John Lawrence

City scrambles for the next Glaxo

TOM STEVENSON

British Biotech is the sort of company that gets the stock market its reputation for being little more than a casino. Its shares were worth just over £10 on Wednesday night, £15.50 by the close of trading on Thursday and £16.75 yesterday after touching £20.

One trade was reported at £25 at one point during the frenzy as investors scrambled to jump on the bandwagon – six times as much as the shares sold for at the beginning of the year.

The question exercising everyone's mind in the City was whether this was the next Glaxo, once a tiny research outfit and now Britain's biggest

company, or just another flash in the pan, lipped by spivvy share dealers to make a profitable turn at someone else's expense.

On the face of it nothing had really changed at the company except that it had announced some relatively promising results from tests on cancer patients of a new drug called Marimastat. There was also the prospect of further results this weekend from tests on another drug, codenamed BB-10010, which prevents damage to the immune system during chemotherapy.

How then could the business be worth £500m one day and £750m the next? At the beginning of the year the market had assigned a value of only about

£200m to exactly the same company.

The reason is that the City is ill-equipped to value businesses like British Biotech which have never made a profit – Thursday's comments on the progress of the Marimastat tests accompanied a loss for the first half of the year of over £10m. When it comes to the flourishing biotechnology sector it's all about hope, the ultimate in what professional fund managers call blue sky investment.

Founded in 1986 when British Biotech's chief executive and chairman were made redundant from top research posts at a US drug firm, Searle, the company gained a stock-market quotation in 1992, riding

a wave of interest in the sector, one of the few commercial areas in which Britain excels.

It is Britain's biggest biotechnology company, and as such the market's biggest hope in its quest for the next Glaxo, the hugely successful drugs company that hit the headlines earlier this year when it took over Wellcome for a record £9bn.

Glaxo brought enormous financial gains to shareholders who backed it 15 years ago before the launch of its blockbuster ulcer treatment, Zantac. Since the beginning of the 1980s the value of the company has soared a staggering 64 times so that it is now Britain's largest company by a wide margin, worth more than £30bn.

A relatively recent phenomenon in the UK, the market's enthusiasm for the biotechnology sector has a long tradition in the US where the largest company Amgen was a 1980s start up operation and is now valued at more than \$8bn (£5bn). For investors who pick the right stock the rewards can be almost limitless.

But British Biotech is also proof positive that when a company's shares are hyped so strongly in the City, the fall can be every bit as painful as the rise was exhilarating. Back in February, the company warned that tests on another cancer treatment, Batimastat, had been delayed and the market responded savagely, wiping away a quarter of the company's value in a single day.

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IN BRIEF

Man in court on kidnap charges

A man appeared in court yesterday charged with kidnapping two schoolgirls who went missing from their homes for three days.

The girls, 9 and 10, who cannot be named for legal reasons, were found alive and well by police on Wednesday night.

Andrew Brendon, 32, of Leicester, who was remanded in custody until 6 December at Leicester magistrates' court, was charged with two counts of kidnapping the girls and with possessing a .22 automatic pistol. He was also accused of possessing cannabis worth £50,000 and amphetamines worth £90,000.

'Mad cow' call

Pressure increased on the Secretary of State for Agriculture, Douglas Hogg, to tighten "mad cow disease" regulations after Professor Sir Bernard Tomlinson, a leading brain scientist and government adviser, warned that bovine spongiform encephalopathy could be transmitted to humans. Labov's agriculture spokesman, Gavin Strang, echoed his call for beef offal to be banned from the food chain.

Piper Alpha claim

A North Sea oil rig painter who saw his colleagues perish in the Piper Alpha disaster in 1988 lost his High Court claim that he suffered psychiatric damage. William Hegarty, 43, was aboard the support vessel which tried to aid the rig as it was destroyed by explosions; 167 people died.

'Cruel' HIV injection

A woman who injected her former boyfriend with her own HIV-infected blood was jailed at the Old Bailey for two years yesterday. World Aids Day, Mrs Justice Steel told Rhona Ndagaba, 25, who came from Uganda in 1993 seeking political asylum, that her crime was "deliberate, calculating and cruel".

Call to ban toy ads

Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, tabled a Commons motion blaming war toys for brutalising boys and encouraging aggressive behaviour in adult life. He says television advertisements for such toys should be banned.

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'Exorcist' killed his fiancée

A self-styled exorcist was jailed for six years yesterday for killing his bride-to-be, and sealing her mummified body in a tomb in his house.

Fanatical religious cult leader Nicholas Sagunro, 27, of East Ham in London, believed his mission was to cure "those possessed with demons and raise

the dead in the name of Christ", the Old Bailey was told.

When he became convinced that his fiancée, Mary Odegbami, was possessed by the devil, he helped to starve her, then force-fed her with "Holy Communion". Judge Richard Hawkins told Sagunro: "You had a duty to care for [Miss

Odegbami] but, as a result, she died from that treatment."

Sagunro, dressed in black, carried a heavy black-leather Bible as he was led to the cells. He had been convicted of manslaughter and false imprisonment at an earlier hearing, but remanded for reports. He denies the charges.

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صحنه من الامل

Barings Bank collapse: Singapore could seek extradition of alleged collaborators in disgraced trader's grand deception

Leeson points finger at bosses in clemency deal

STEPHEN VINES
Singapore

A number of senior executives at Barings Bank may face prosecution as a result of evidence given by the disgraced trader Nick Leeson in return for lenient treatment.

"The bosses knew something was amiss but took no action," Leeson's lawyer, John Koh, told the court in Singapore yesterday. He said Leeson's immediate bosses, Simon Jones and James Bax, were aware of the fact that Leeson was hiding the extent of his trading losses from Coopers and Lybrand, Barings' auditors, as were many senior executives in London.

Mr Jones and Mr Bax remain in Singapore, where their passports are held by the authorities. Both men have been closely questioned by the financial crimes unit which is investigating the Barings collapse.

However, the most severe criticism in the Singaporean inspectors' report on the collapse is reserved for Peter Norris, the former chief executive officer of the Barings Investment Bank Group, who may face extradition from London.

In the ruthless free market of financial trading, Barings' com-

petitors punished the bank for its negligible controls and left Leeson with the responsibility of appearing before the court to determine his punishment, said Mr Koh.

Leeson has no reason to protect those who left him with this responsibility. It is clear that he will tell the authorities everything he knows about their role in unlawful activity at Barings.

Singapore needs his evidence because, as the independent inspectors' report - commissioned by the minister of finance - shows, there was little co-operation with either the Bank of England or senior Barings executives outside Singapore.

Leeson can fill in some of the gaps and be a witness with direct knowledge of events. This knowledge is the key to the bargain he has struck with the authorities in return for a reduced punishment.

Less important, but crucial, have been his lawyer's many references to Leeson's regret over having cast doubt on the impartiality of Singapore's legal system. The government is determined to ensure that the Barings fall-out does not damage the credibility of the island state as an international financial centre. Part of that credi-

bility depends on trust in the legal system.

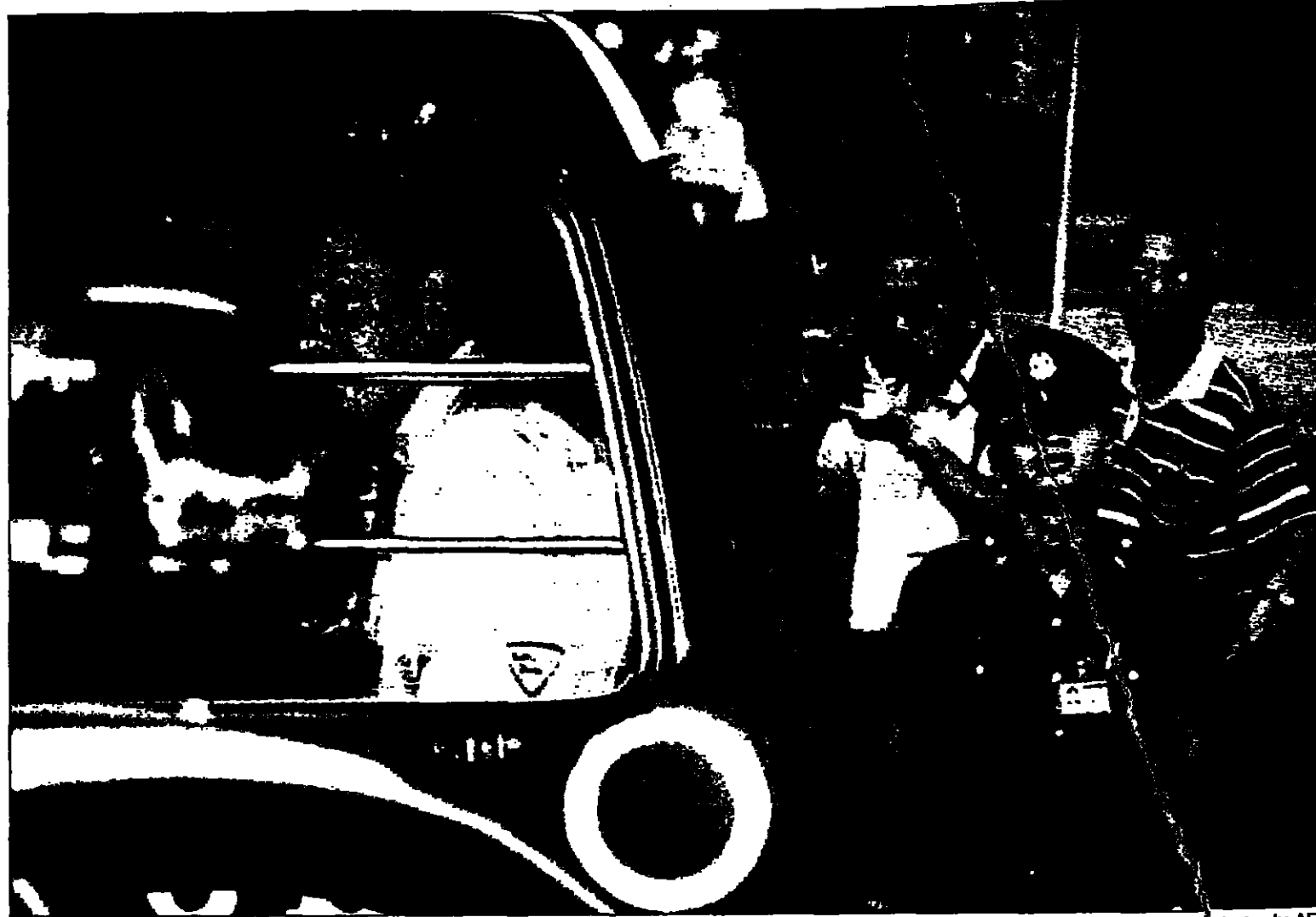
Even though Leeson has negotiated a deal for himself, it is clear that he was involved in criminal acts which went beyond simple financial manipulation.

Lawrence Ang, who led the prosecution's case in the trial, described in detail some of the ingenious ways in which Leeson hid the extent of his losses and managed to trick Barings' auditors into believing that his losses did not exist.

At the end of January 1995, Leeson was having trouble explaining the loss of 7.8bn yen (£50m), which he had tried to disguise by alleging that an American customer would be paying this sum back to Barings.

However there was no customer and there was no more cash (although Leeson forged letters from the customer stating that the cash would be paid). As the auditors closed in, he devised a plan to transfer the missing money from one Barings bank account to another, before swiftly moving it back to the account to which it belonged.

The purpose of this subterfuge was to obtain documentary evidence that the alleged debt had been repaid.



Cutting his losses: Nick Leeson arriving by prison van for yesterday's hearing at which he admitted two charges

Photograph: AFP

original collapse was found in Leeson's desk.

Meanwhile Leeson had identified the weak link in the reporting system of the Singapore International Monetary Exchange (Simex), which required futures traders to maintain a reserve account with the exchange

to protect the exchange against default. He saw that it was possible to key a false trade into the exchange's computer, which had no means of knowing whether it had actually been transacted. Once this was done the false Barings client's account making the loss could be said to

be in balance, therefore allowing Barings to recover almost \$115m (£75m) of its money held as security with Simex at a time when it was falling into deeper and deeper debt.

As for Leeson himself, he too is in debt, according to Mr Koh. He now has no assets, only

liabilities. The proceeds from his forthcoming book will go to the lawyers in Britain, Germany and Singapore, as well as his agent and ghost writer.

Mr Koh said Leeson made no profit from his reckless, unauthorised trading, he was simply trying to cover up losses.

Watford's different class of banker City panic changed to disbelief

MARY BRAID

From council house in downtown Watford to Singapore slayer of the Queen's bank - the class chasm between Nick Leeson and Barings was almost as central to the story as the lost £800m.

Singapore police and reporters chased Leeson to Malaysia after the scandal broke, rocking the world's financial markets. At home his shell-shocked family - his father Harry, a plasterer, and his three younger brothers and sisters -

were also being pursued to provide a picture of the working-class boy who broke Britain's oldest merchant bank.

From Watford and Singapore emerged two very different profiles. At the local Farmers' School they were stunned by the former project's new-found notoriety. Nick was remembered as "quiet" dependable and steady. Failing A-level maths proved no obstacle to a career in banking. He left school to work for Coutts before joining Barings in 1990. In 1992 he married Lisa.

When the news broke his stunned father-in-law Alex Simms was loyal. Nick, he claimed, was a sensible lad. He was sure he was innocent.

But colleagues and acquaintances in Singapore said Leeson was arrogant and flashy. At work he was regarded as a miracle worker, the man who took risks and could not lose. "He seemed to be able to move markets," remembered one fellow trader.

The cocky trader image was one Leeson sought hard to shed. In an interview with David Frost he played down the "ex-

travagance" of his old Singapore lifestyle and reports of luxury apartments and personal yachts.

Last month, however, when Leeson was reeled back in to Singapore it was the arrogant Nick - broad grin under the reversed baseball cap - that reappeared. But surely the other Nick was hiding beneath the hubris. For the horror of his situation must have long sunk home and Singaporean justice will not look lightly on a man it considers to have damaged the squeaky-clean image of its financial centre.

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The Barings catastrophe provoked panic among City investment banks. But they were less worried that others would be brought low by the contagion of collapse, than suffering an eruption of the fear that stalks every high-risk taking financial business - are we next?

Barings collapsed not just because a young trader halfway across the world bet more than twice the capital of the bank on hare-brained derivatives spec-

ulation, but because Barings' entire risk management system failed to spot what was going on.

The big trading houses spend fortunes on sophisticated computer technology and specialist departments whose vital daily task is to monitor and control the risks involved, as billions of pounds change hands, and to ensure that no single trader steps out of line.

Suddenly, every bank felt terribly vulnerable. "Just days after the Barings collapse we had to present ourselves to the Barclays board and explain how this

just could not happen here," says Graham Newall, chief executive of futures at BZW, Barclays investment bank. "We really believed that, but when we came back, we had to put our hands on our hearts and say, how can we be so sure?"

"Nobody slept well in the days immediately following Barings," said the head of risk management at another City investment bank. "There was a frenzied rush to make sure that every banker's worst nightmare could not happen here."

As more details seeped out

about how Barings collapsed, the less threatening it appeared for other finance houses. Even to this day, senior bankers in the City shake their heads in utter disbelief at how Britain's oldest merchant bank managed to run a securities business with such a total lack of the most rudimentary checks. The reports by both the Bank of England's investigators and those of the Singapore authorities painted a garish picture of rampant managerial arrogance and incompetence, which Nick Leeson exploited with apparent ease.

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صبرنا من الامل

MP denies threatening to kill wife with knife

REBECCA FOWLER

David Ashby, the Tory MP, denied to a libel jury yesterday that he threatened to kill his wife with a carving knife, and accused her of being obsessed with media attention following the exposure of the failure of their marriage.

Mr Ashby, MP for Leicester North West, also denied he threatened to set his wife, Silvana, on fire with a cigarette lighter and dismissed allegations he picked up a knife to attack her when she visited his home in Leicester, where he was staying with a male friend.

"She was coming at me and attacking me, and I pushed her away," Mr Ashby said. "She phoned the police, and I was horrified by that. She'd been standing there saying 'help, help, he's attacking me'."

Mr Ashby burst into tears at the High Court on the fifth day of giving evidence in his libel case against the *Sunday Times* and Andrew Neil, its former editor, following allegations that he is homosexual.

As Mr Ashby, 55, recalled the day in January 1993 when the newspaper published the article, which alleged Silvana Ashby, 52, his Italian wife, was furious he had left her and moved to live close to another man, he broke down.

"It was absolutely dreadful. I had no control over it," Mr Ashby said. "It was my wife on one hand alternating between rages... the press hammering at the door, the telephone ringing, the pack howling at the gates."

But Mr Ashby said when he asked his daughter Alex, 27, to come home and "rescue" him,

Mrs Ashby lost her temper again. He claimed she did not want a friend of Alex's, Suzie, to pick her up from the airport because it would divert attention from her.

"She said all they wanted to do was grab the limelight, arrive in a taxi and prance in front of the cameras," Mr Ashby said. "My wife seemed obsessed by the limelight."

Although Mr Ashby agrees he shared a double bed in a French chateau hotel with Dr Claran Kilduff, 32, his neighbour in Putney, south-west London, he denied that they shared each other's beds there and dismissed allegations they had homosexual relations.

Richard Hartley QC, for the *Sunday Times*, said it would be unrealistic to say how intimate the men were, but it was a homosexual relationship.

"You and Dr Kilduff shared a degree of physical intimacy as part of your homosexual affection for each other, and in pursuance of the homosexual affair," Mr Hartley said. "It could have been kissing and cuddling."

Mr Ashby later claimed he did not spend a night at Dr Kilduff's flat because he was tending to the family dogs.

When Mr Hartley accused Mr Ashby of sending a black-mail letter to his wife, telling her not to give evidence at the trial, he broke down in tears again, and claimed he was protecting his wife's dignity.

"What is the world thinking of my wife now, in the press all the time," he said. "I tried to speak to her. I didn't want it to happen."

The case continues.

Leah Betts' funeral hears of father's pride and love



'Little ship' lost: The Rev Don Gordon leading the procession as Leah's coffin was carried out of Christ Church

Photograph: Edward Webb

The father of Leah Betts, who died last month after taking an ecstasy tablet on her 18th birthday, paid tribute to his "pretty little ship" at her funeral service yesterday.

In a moving address at Christ Church in Letchington, Essex, Paul Betts spoke of his pride and love for his daughter and described how he taught her how to deal with the world.

Comparing himself to a ship's captain the former policeman said: "He thought that he had prepared the little ship for anything that the sea could throw at it... he trusted it with all his heart and believed that wherever it went it would return safely."

"All of a sudden a gigantic wave lifted the little ship into the air and tossed it on to jagged rocks... His little ship was lost and would never again sail the sea," he said.

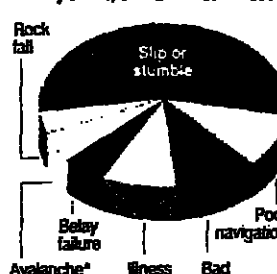
Family, friends and dozens of teenagers were among the congregation. Many stood outside the church, listening to service taken by the Rev Don Gordon broadcast on speakers.

Leah was later buried alongside her mother, Dorothy, at St Mary Magdalen church, Great Burstead, Essex.

Mountaineers defend risks in the Highlands

Mountaineering casualties and accidents

by cause, Scotland 1989 to 1993



*In winter only avalanches become the second greatest cause of casualties

Occupation	Total	Fatalities
Student	98	8
Retired**	57	18
Engineer	31	4
School child	30	7
Teacher	30	6
Housewife	26	0
Unemployed	27	4
Forces	26	6

**60% of retired's fatalities were due to pre-existing medical conditions

STEPHEN GOODWIN

With the first snow having already fallen on the Scottish hills, the British Mountaineering Council took pre-emptive action yesterday, pointing out the pleasures and pitfalls of its sport before the inevitable crop of winter accidents.

A good winter in mountaineering terms - a decent cover of snow and ice and the weather to get out on it - will mean more deaths. Past statistics suggest that about 30 mountaineers will be killed in the Highlands this winter.

Just as predictably, their deaths will be followed by calls for a ban on climbers taking to the hills in "bad" weather, for compulsory rescue insurance and for certificates of competence.

The BMC rejects all such restrictions. "For the mountaineer the most important freedom is to be able to take risks," said Doug Scott, the council's vice-president, a man who has courted the line edge for decades from the Highlands to the Himalayas and suffered serious injury.

"Those reacting in knee-jerk fashion to highly publicised mountaineering accidents have simply failed to see that there is a success story writ large over our hills every winter, when thousands of walkers and climbers safely and competently deal with all the hazards and enjoy the freedom of the mountains," Mr Scott said.

Contrary to the winter crop of newspaper headlines, statistics suggest that the number of incidents is falling as a proportion of the increasing numbers taking to the hills for recreation.

The proportion of incidents resulting in fatalities has also fallen,

partly as a result of better protective clothing stopping people simply freezing to death.

Nonetheless the risk is real enough. In the winter months of 1994 (January to April and October to December) on Lochnagar, a popular winter climbing area south of Braemar in the Grampians, there were 63 incidents with 15 deaths. In the first three months of this year there were two deaths in 16 incidents.

Though the image of winter mountaineering is of a climber with ice axes and crampons on a desperate ice face, by far the commonest cause of accidents is a simple slip or stumble, often while descending on easy ground. In winter, avalanches become the second greatest cause. The statistics reinforce the BMC's case that there is no such thing as winter hill walking, only winter mountaineering. Yesterday's London press briefing, supported by Chris Bonington, president-elect of the Alpine Club, and Ian McNaught-Davis, president of the world body for mountaineering (UIAA), was intended to put the risk into perspective, counter the calls of "misguided and alarmist politicians" for regulation, and emphasise the need for climbers to hone their winter skills.

The BMC represents clubs with a combined membership of some 35,000 - perhaps a third of the British climbing fraternity. Its president, Paul Nunn, was killed in the Karakoram, Pakistan, in August.

However perverse it might seem to the non-practitioner, the vast majority of climbers share the view of Mr McNaught-Davis: "If you extract the risk from climbing there wouldn't be a sport at all."



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news

Raid hits trade in endangered species

Seized medicines allegedly made from parts of tigers, rhino, bears and tortoises. Louise Jury reports



Trade war: One of the packets of seized Chinese medicines. Photograph: Edward Sykes

Chinese medicines allegedly made from parts of tigers, rhinoceroses, bears and tortoises were being tested yesterday after detectives seized large quantities in a raid on a warehouse. Officers investigating the illegal trade in endangered species raided the west London warehouse, described as the "small airport hangar", a second prong of an off-against the trade.

Lorry-load of products away for analysis and, which was carried away at the same time, were seized from a lorry in Hong Kong, manager has been re- for possible offences in of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (Cites) to which this is a signatory.

The move follows an operation in February when products from threatened animals were seized from shops in London, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. Two London shop-owners were fined £3,000 and £2,000 respectively and ordered to pay costs.

Inspector John Francis, the Metropolitan Police's senior wildlife officer, and PC Dave Cove said they believed the warehouse was a major supplier for the south-east of England.





The valuable raw animal products, such as bear bile and tiger bone, sell for up to £200 an ounce, making the haul worth thousands.

Wildlife organisations, which have been consulted about the Metropolitan Police initiative, codenamed Operation Charm, welcomed the action.

Bobbie Jo Kelso, of Traffic, which monitors the trade in co-operation with the Cites Secretariat, said: "We're really pleased that things were found because we think every item counts. But we're particularly pleased that a lot less was found than in February."

The world-wide trade was "absolutely huge" but it appeared that traders in Britain were deciding the police operation made it not worth the risk, she said.

Larry Farmer, of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), said it was good that police were taking the problem seriously. "This illegal trade is threatening animals, like tigers, with imminent extinction. Unless the trade can be stopped, there is no future for animals like tigers."

Animal cures: their origins and claims made for them				
				
	Rhinoceros	Saiga Antelope	Tiger	Bear
Part of animal used	Rhino horn allegedly in Peaceful Tea and Chinese Old Man Tea, consumed this week.	Saiga antelope horn in Peaceful Tea	Tiger bone	Bear bile
What it does	Rhino horn is a valuable ingredient in traditional Chinese medicine but is not, contrary to popular belief, prescribed as an aphrodisiac. It is used to treat many illnesses, particularly fever-reducing fevers and strokes. Research on the pharmacological characteristics has shown evidence of fever-reducing properties.	Saiga horn is used to treat coronary heart disease, vertigo and other complaints. Reports from Chinese doctors have indicated that saiga horn is used to treat many illnesses and is also believed to relieve pain in rheumatic joints. A blood vessel-reducing effect in rabbits suffering from hypertension.	Tiger bone is used to treat many illnesses and is also believed to relieve pain in rheumatic joints. A blood vessel-reducing effect in rabbits suffering from hypertension.	Bear bile is used to treat many illnesses and is also believed to relieve pain in rheumatic joints. A blood vessel-reducing effect in rabbits suffering from hypertension.
Population of animal	Total population now around 10,000 including fewer than 100 in the wild. In 1970, black rhinos may have numbered 65,000 in sub-Saharan Africa and were the most numerous of the five species. Today, only about 2,500 left.	The worldwide population is now less than 100. In 1970, there were three million. It is listed in CITES as a vulnerable species. Only 350 are thought to survive in the wild.	There are now about 5,000. All five remaining subspecies are threatened with extinction.	There are now about 5,000. All five remaining subspecies are threatened with extinction.
Where they are found	Asia, Southern Africa	Central Asia, Southern Europe	South America, North America	North America, Europe

Chinese remedies are rooted in 4,000 years of tradition, but growing Western interest in alternative medicines has increased the threat to animal and plant species.

Products taken on Thursday included some using the root and seed pods of a rare orchid not previously known to environmental investigators for its use in Chinese medicine.

It is an offence not only to sell or keep for sale products on the Cites banned lists, but also any purporting to contain them - even if they do not. Many of the products taken from the warehouse do not have an English description of what they do.

Where they have one, they have been covered with a sticker stating: "No medical claims are made for this product".

'Pay beds' yield the NHS £300 profit per patient

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The National Health Service is making a profit of almost £300 for each private patient it treats, money that can be ploughed back into treating more NHS patients, according to a detailed independent study of whether the NHS is subsidising private patients or making money from them.

Even if "hidden" costs are taken into account - the cost to the public sector of training doctors and nurses, unexpected

admissions to NHS intensive care, and loss of consultants' time to the NHS - pay-bed units are still making an average profit of £235 a case, the study concluded.

Multiplying up across all pay-bed activity, that is enough to keep a 250-bed NHS acute hospital in business, according to David Cavers, managing director of Norwich Union Healthcare, which sponsored the study.

The study was carried out by National Economic Research Associates, an independent firm of consultants, who examined

the accounts of six NHS hospitals whose pay beds accounted for an 11 per cent sample of dedicated pay-bed units.

Although a sample survey, it represents the most detailed examination yet of whether the NHS gains financially or not from treating private patients.

Independent hospitals - with which pay-bed units are in direct competition - have long argued that the NHS subsidises private patients. And yesterday the Independent Healthcare Association underlined that stance by calling for proper regulation of

pay-bed units and transparently audited accounts of private care.

The study comes as the NHS is taking an increasing share - now up to 15 per cent - of the private-patient market at the expense of private and independent hospitals. With extra pay beds forming part of many of the new private finance deals, that share is likely to grow.

Most of the pay-bed units overestimated the "profit" they made, according to NERA's study. None the less, their average revenue was £1,710 per private patient, and their average

treatment cost £1,400, including the return on capital which the hospitals have to make.

That £310 surplus should be adjusted down to allow for junior doctors' time, the study says - an estimated cost of £19. That left a financial surplus of £290 per patient.

In a more pessimistic scenario, NERA says, a further £56 should be knocked off to allow for lost consultant time (£12), unplanned intensive care (£8), training of nurses (£24) and training of doctors (£12). That still left a £235 surplus.

Not all six units were equally profitable. Their surplus, after allowing for junior doctors' time, ranged from £30 to £590, but all made a surplus.

The average gain of £290 per patient, "would represent around £170,000 for each £1m of private patient revenue," the study concludes.

Pay beds may well be more profitable than private hospitals - in part because their occupancy rates are higher at 60 per cent, against 53 per cent for private hospitals. Shared facilities with the NHS - use of operating

theatres, for example - may also provide economies of scale, the study says.

The Independent Healthcare Association yesterday called for a moratorium on new pay-bed units until NHS private-patient activity was properly audited. The association also queried whether the use of government funds to allow the NHS to compete against private hospitals was legitimate.

Are Pay-Beds Profitable? Norwich Union Healthcare, Chilworth House, Templars Way, Eastleigh, SO53 3RY, Free.

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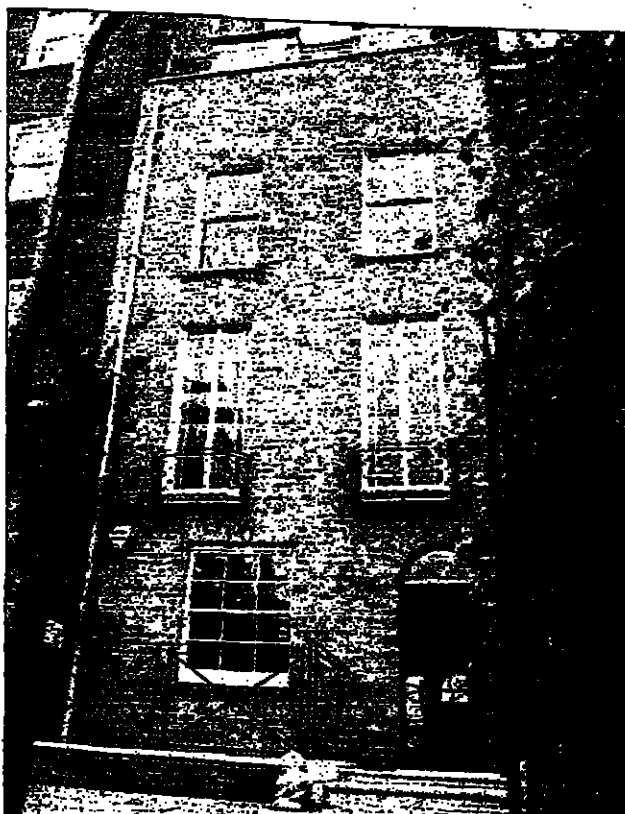
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Chelsea's symbol of Sixties jet-set put up for sale at £1.8m



On the market: The terrace house could fetch £1.8m

ANNE SPACKMAN

Commissioned by the Tennant family, designed by the architect of Annabel's and photographed for *Vogue* by Norman Parkinson, number 23 St Leonard's Terrace, Chelsea, could easily have challenged Centrepoint for listing as an architectural symbol of the Sixties. The building and the people who passed through it represented the Chelsea jet-set - as it was then called - in the way Bloomsbury stood for the Thirties.

The house is one of a row of listed Georgian terraces overlooking Sir Christopher Wren's Royal Hospital in west London. James Tennant needed the help of Sir Hugh Casson, then president of the Royal Academy, to negotiate planning permission for its redevelopment in 1969.

He commissioned the decorator John Fowler, of Colefax and Fowler fame, to pull out the interior and rebuild it as a contemporary home, and Fowler in turn brought in the distinguished architect Philip Webb, who carried out work for the Duke and Duchess of Devon-

shire and designed the Gorillaarium at John Aspinall's Howlets Zoo. This was despite Webb's reputation as a traditionalist and Fowler's name being inextricably linked with chintz.

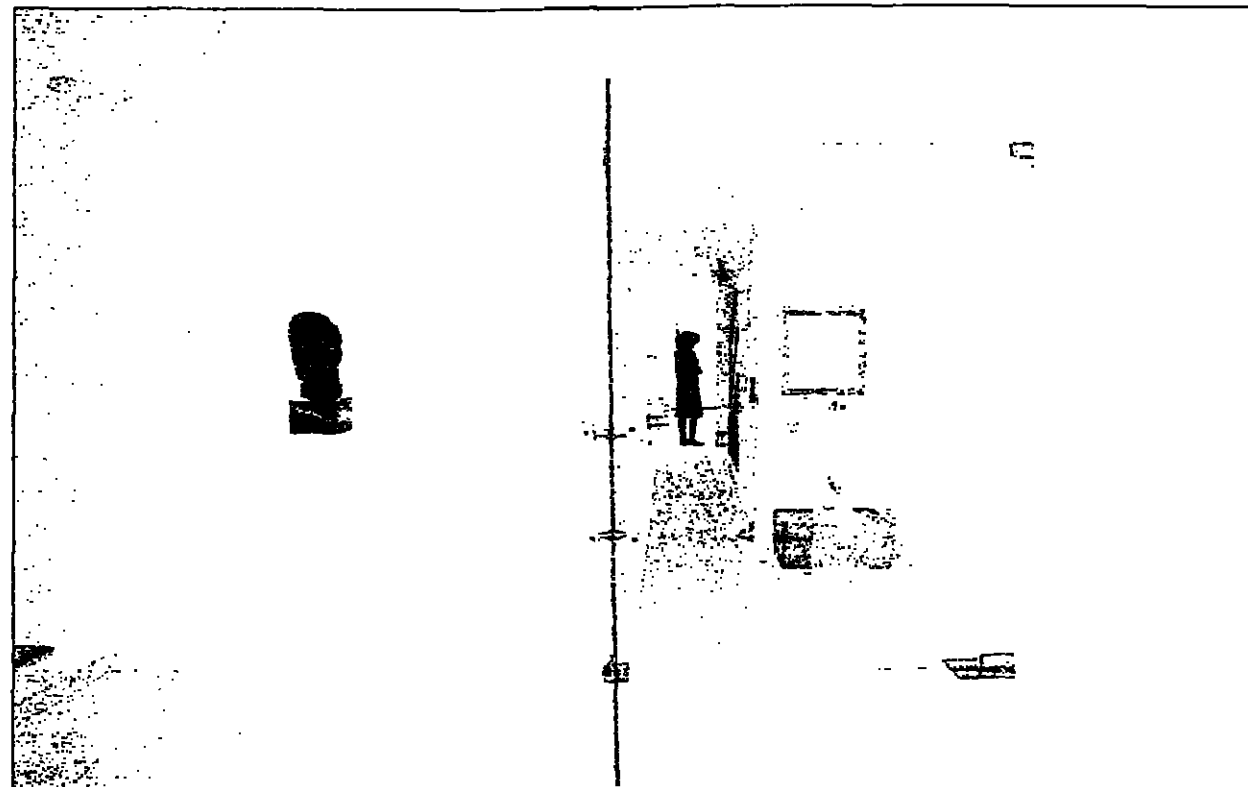
The house was built on a 70ft steel frame with a central staircase of glass, marble, chrome and brass. A 20ft window forms part of the double cube glass dining room at the back. The handles on the glass doors in the 50ft marble hall are made from elephant tusks set in silver with inlaid lapis lazuli.

But the house is not a shrine to the Sixties. It features furniture by Le Corbusier as well as Anthony Redmile and one of its three gardens is in the 17th century Italianate style.

The house, which has five bedrooms and three bathrooms, is now being sold on behalf of Elizabeth Edwards, James Tennant's widow, by Knight Frank and Rutley, Russell Simpson and Berkeley International for £1.8m.

It would make a suitable palace for a member of the rock royalty.

Homing device, Magazine



Living in style: The decorator John Fowler replaced the Georgian interior with Sixties chic Photographs: Geraint Lewis

Former judge renews attack on Howard

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, yesterday stuck firmly to his plans for automatic life sentences for repeat violent and sexual offenders after Lord Donaldson, the former Master of the Rolls, attacked the Government as "despotic".

Defending his "two strikes and you're out" proposal that would impose mandatory life sentences for such offenders, Mr Howard insisted on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "The purpose of this proposal is to give the public that greater protection by ensuring that those who commit serious sexual or violent offences for a second time are not released until some assessment is made of the risk to the public. At the moment, if they don't get a life sentence, they are released even when everybody knows they still constitute a risk."

A source close to the Home Secretary said Mr Howard remained confident that his proposal had public backing because the Parole Board would always assess risk to the public before releasing a prisoner who had served the "tariff" set by the judge at the time of sentencing. "When you are dealing with a second-time violent offender, are people

really arguing that the risk to the public of releasing him shouldn't be considered?" the source said.

The proposal for judges to set the tariffs to be served by life prisoners was spelled out in private discussions between Mr Howard and Lord Taylor, the Lord Chief Justice, prior to the Home Secretary's party conference speech unveiling the plans.

The Home Secretary is also said to have made clear that the "three strikes and you're out" proposal for minimum sentences for burglars and hard drug dealers would still allow judges to waive the minimum sentence in exceptional circumstances.

But Lord Donaldson insisted yesterday: "What worries me is any extension in mandatory life sentences where in effect the judge is being told by Parliament that they must hand over sentencing to the Home Secretary."

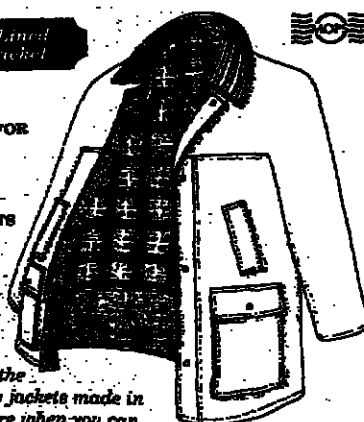
Mr Howard said there was no question of transferring sentencing powers to the Government and that the area of disagreement was "a narrow one".

Lord Donaldson has warned, however, of an unprecedented level of interference by politicians in the work of judges. He was speaking out because of "an entirely new development" which was triggering a constitutional crisis. Lord Taylor has also attacked the proposals for automatic life sentences.

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international

France at a standstill: Franc battered by eighth day of stoppages and protests against Chirac's welfare reforms

Strikers invade the runways at Orly

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

France's worst labour unrest since 1986 spread to Orly airport in Paris yesterday when 200 Air France ground personnel occupied two runways, stopping planes from landing and halting domestic and transatlantic departures. It was the first time that air traffic had been disrupted by strikes and demonstrations eight days ago in protest at the government's plan to reform the welfare state and curb state spending.

"France needs to work. Our economy is still convalescent. The government is determined to carry out the reforms it has announced, because it is a question of survival," the government spokesman, Alain Lamassou, said in a statement warning that many companies would start to lay off workers if the strikes continued.

President Jacques Chirac's government must implement its

reforms if France is to reduce its budget deficit sufficiently to meet the Maastricht treaty's conditions for joining a single European currency in 1999. French stocks and bonds slumped yesterday and the franc fell a centime to 3.4625 to the Mark as financial markets weighed the impact of the strikes on France's chances of meeting the criteria on time.

Even before dawn, the Paris region was locked in traffic

jams that extended for more than 200 miles as commuters sought a way round the strikes paralysing public-transport systems. The state rail network was almost completely shut down, there were no buses or Métro services in the capital, and thousands of Parisians cycled, roller-skated and walked to work.

The social unrest turned violent on Thursday night when about 30 people were injured in clashes in Paris and the western city of Nantes between riot police and youths throwing stones and petrol bombs. The clashes broke out on the fringes of protests organised by students who are demanding more resources for underfunded, overcrowded universities.

Employees in the education and health sectors are set to join the strikes on Monday, along with tax officials, customs staff and workers in the telecommunications industry. Unions at the Bank of France have called out its 20,000 staff for a two-day strike next Thursday and Friday.

Government officials said they had no intention yet of mobilising the army to help Parisians overcome the transport strikes. During a similar crisis in 1988, the authorities used 350 army trucks to take people around the city.

With the strikes breaking out so close to Christmas, Mr Chirac and his Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, may be calculating that public exasperation will increase to the point where union leaders will feel com-

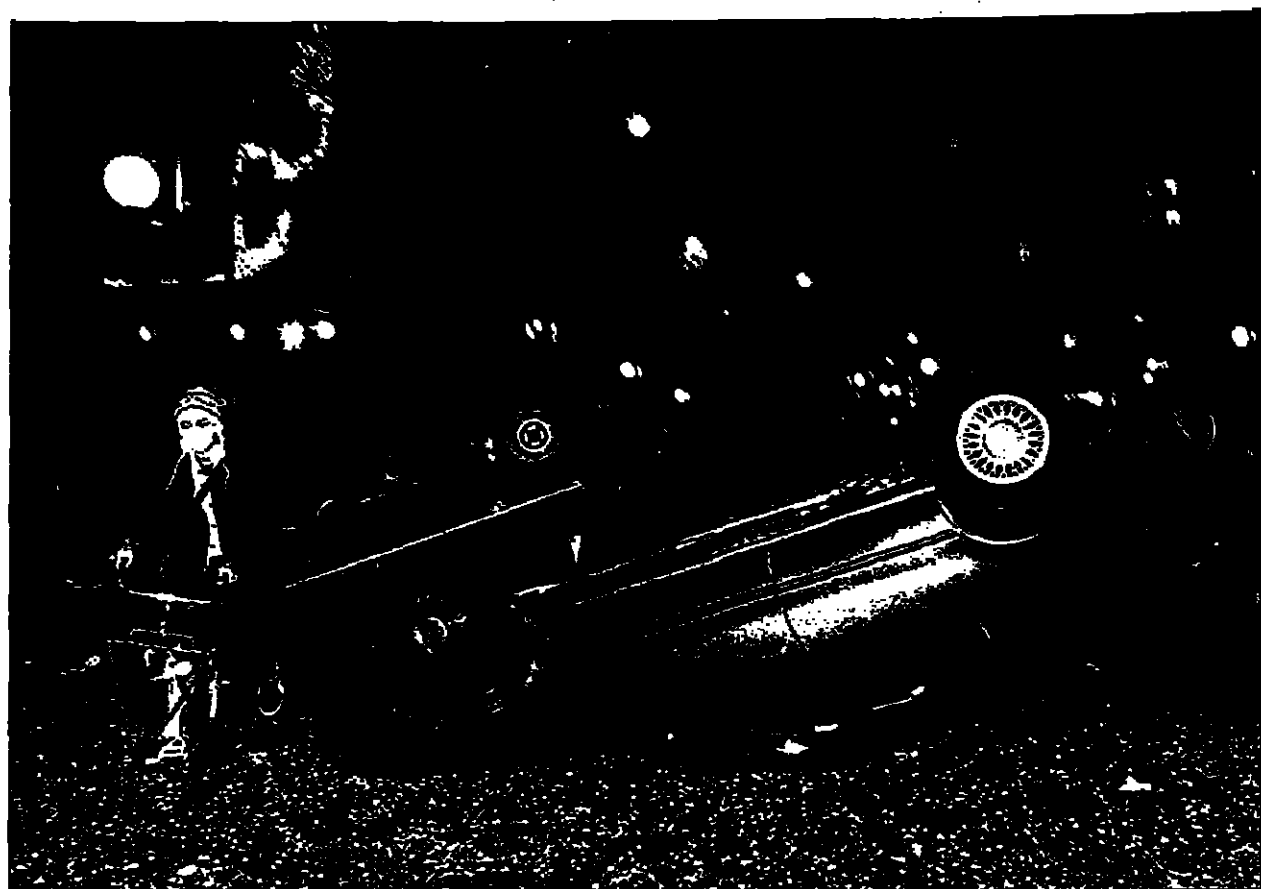
pelled to call off their protests. The President has the power to dissolve the National Assembly and call a snap election or referendum on his policies, but his aides say such extreme action is unnecessary at the moment.

Government officials say that, while it may be possible to make more money available for universities, there must be no watering down of the plans announced by Mr Juppé last month for a fundamental overhaul of the social-security system. The system pays for health care, pensions and family allowances and, like the SNCF state railway network, is buried under a mountain of debt.

The government's aim is to restore order to the public finances so that the budget deficit falls to 4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product next year and 3 per cent in 1997, enabling France to qualify for European monetary union. But the government's ability to meet these targets depends on the accuracy of its predictions for economic growth, and most economists believe these are too optimistic.

The government has forecast 2.9 per cent growth this year and 2.8 per cent in 1996, but few independent economists believe that growth will exceed 2.5 per cent this year and 2 per cent in 1996. The latest strikes are certain to weaken the economy by depressing output and could even result in a contraction of GDP for the last quarter of 1995.

All this means that the government may have to announce



Evasive action: A cyclist avoids cars overturned by young people after university students protested in Jussieu

still tougher austerity measures to meet its budget-deficit targets, a policy that runs the risk of provoking even more extensive labour unrest. "The risk remains that the austerity

package will depress private spending more than expected, making deficit reduction even more difficult," said Jean-François Mercier, an economist at Salomon Brothers.

France's determination to meet the Maastricht conditions and launch the single currency on schedule also implies delaying an assault on unemployment, currently at 11.5

per cent. Mr Chirac won the election on a pledge to make job creation his priority, but switched course in late October to a strict diet of budgetary discipline.

IN BRIEF

Soldiers arrested over bomb attack

Buenos Aires - The Argentine authorities raided the country's largest military base and arrested about a dozen people, including several soldiers, in connection with the 1994 car-bomb attack on a Jewish cultural centre in which 86 people were killed. Local media said the raid on the Campo de Mayo barracks, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, was ordered after arms caches were found near by.

Aids test conviction - A court in Germany convicted three executives of the UB Plasma company and a laboratory assistant of distributing shoddy tested blood products, infecting at least three people with the HIV virus, which causes Aids.

Author acquitted

Istanbul - A Turkish security court acquitted Yasar Kemal, one of the country's best-known authors, who was charged with "provoking hatred and enmity" in an article for *Der Spiegel* magazine in Germany. In it he accused the authorities of "a campaign of lies" to hide systematic oppression, particularly of the Kurds.

Aid for dissidents

Cairo - King Hussein of Jordan has promised to help exiled Iraqi dissidents try to topple Saddam Hussein, but urged them to unite first. Iraqi opposition leaders say.

Aristide to marry

Port-au-Prince - Haiti's President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the priest-turned-politician who outraged the Vatican with his fiery activism, has made another breach with his religious past: He says he is getting married. He did not name his fiancée nor the date of the wedding, but sources said his future bride is Mildred Trouillot, a Haitian-American lawyer who works in the Haitian Embassy in Washington.

Castro dons suit

Peking - The Cuban president, Fidel Castro, shed his military fatigues in favour of a dark suit to talk business with the Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng. Mr Castro also greeted Mr Li with a simple handshake, eschewing the old-style socialist bear hug with which he greeted the Chinese Communist Party chief and President, Jiang Zemin, on Thursday.

Strike at 'Liberation'

Paris - The French daily *Liberation*, once the cult newspaper of a generation of left-wingers, plans to shed a quarter of its staff next year in a fresh attempt to stem losses. The newspaper's journalists, who would bear two-thirds of the 95 redundancies, have called a strike on Monday to oppose the proposed cuts.

New smoking bans

Singapore - Singapore, which already had the toughest anti-smoking laws in Asia, has tightened them further. Lighting up is now banned in air-conditioned shopping malls, pedestrian underpasses and outdoor public places where two or more people stand in queues, such as bus stops.

Second panda birth

Peking - Qionglai, a 19-year-old resident of the Giant Panda Research Center in China's Fujian province, has given birth for the second year in succession, even though most female pandas in captivity become infertile at about 16.

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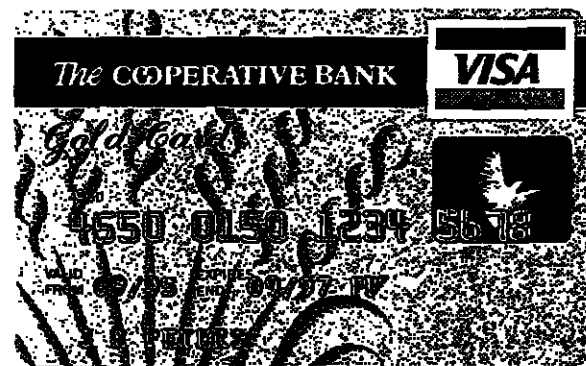
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China slams Patten as 'big spender'

STEVE CRAWSHAW
London and
TERESA POOLE
Peking

Britain took the unusual step of summoning the acting Chinese ambassador after the Communists had complained that the British Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, had allowed welfare spending in the colony to rise too high.

Mr Patten was always known as a political "wet" in the Conservative Party. But even he probably never expected a shades-of-Thatcher attack from such an unlikely quarter. After all, Mr Patten last hit the headlines in Britain with a speech saying that Western governments should scale back public spending and follow the example of East Asian economies - such as Hong Kong.

Chen Zuo'er, head of the budget team working with Britain on the colony's 1997 handover to China, described Mr Patten as a "big spender". Britain responded by summoning the Chinese chargé d'affaires in London, Wang Qi Liang, for a diplomatic slap on the wrist.

Mr Chen had declared: "Since the arrival of this Governor, welfare spending has suddenly become a Formula One car. If it runs at the present speed, for not too long, it will crash and kill. On board this car are 6 million people (in Hong Kong)." Mr Patten, he said, was "a big spender" who was "not qualified to speak".

Andrew Burns, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, expressed concern "at behaviour which could be construed as interference with the promised level of autonomy for Hong Kong". He objected to "personal abuse of the Governor which was unacceptable to the British Government".

The Chinese embassy issued a statement which noted that Mr Patten was the "plenipotentiary of Her Majesty the Queen", and that the Chinese government and officials "are clear about and respect" this position. After the summoning of Mr Wang, British officials sought to play down the mini-drama, insisting that this was "not a rebuke". It was, however, "unhelpful [for the Chinese] to start rocking the boat".

In reacting to remarks by a middle-ranking official, Britain is serving notice that Peking must respect Hong Kong's autonomy as a future "Special Administrative Region" of China. After June 1997, when Hong Kong reverts to China, policies such as welfare spending are supposed to be decided by the Hong Kong government and legislature, not Peking, under the "one country, two systems" principle. A furious Mr Patten retorted this week: "People should leave us to drive our own car."

Hong Kong officials yesterday suggested that the British

expression of displeasure was welcome, but belated. "It's about time. There's been too little of that," one official said.

Peking is convinced Britain wants Hong Kong to spend as much money as possible before 1997, and plans to leave its ex-colony with heavy budget commitments. Mr Chen said that welfare spending had surged by two-thirds over the past five years. He criticised one Hong Kong official's pledge that wel-



'Big spender': Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong

fare would reach "First World" levels over the next five years.

This latest row follows alarm in the colony about reports that China plans to set up a shadow government for Hong Kong before 1997, in a bid to influence policy and undermine the existing administration.

Hong Kong has an ageing population, which is putting greater strain on public spending. But over the past decade, economic growth has also made more resources available.

Kay Ku Yin-kay, the acting director of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, said welfare spending was only 1.5 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and added: "Such a wealthy society as Hong Kong can afford it." In China, by contrast, people have seen their former welfare safety net swiftly eroded over the past decade as economic reform has shattered the old "iron rice bowl" cradle-to-grave welfare system.

Hong Kong officials argued yesterday that "Peking's bark is sometimes worse than its bite", and that the rude tone should not necessarily be seen as a harbinger of things to come.

The message from China to Hong Kong's civil servants was clear, one official said. "They're saying: 'In future, we're your masters.'" Even from Peking's point of view, this may be a dangerous form of brinkmanship. China can scarcely want Hong Kong's civil servants to desert en masse.

Bosnia peace deal: As troops prepare to leave, Sarajevo's French commander attacks US motives and raises fears for Serbs



False alarm: Bosnian Serb police detain blindfolded men arrested near the front line. They turned out to be Serbs

Photograph: Reuters

Nato to deploy advance force

KURT SCHORK
Reuters

Sarajevo — Nato agreed yesterday to send the first 2,000 troops of a 60,000-strong force to police a Bosnia peace settlement, but the UN commander for Sarajevo openly criticised the deal and warned it might be unworkable.

Nato ambassadors meeting in Brussels agreed to dispatch an "enabling force" of American, French and British troops who are expected to start arriving in Bosnia early next week to check that roads and airfields can take heavy military traffic.

The Nato decision came after a major obstacle to the participation of 20,000 American troops in the force was removed when the Senate Republican leader, Bob Dole, gave his reluctant backing in Washington.

Mr Dole announced he was drafting a resolution of support for the Bosnia mission. But the French UN commander for Sarajevo, General

Jean-René Bachelet, said the deal brokered in Dayton, Ohio, by the US government had been forced through to promote President Bill Clinton's re-election campaign.

The general also attacked a clause bringing Serb suburbs of Sarajevo under the control of the Muslim-Croat government. General Bachelet said Sarajevo Serbs would flee in their thousands, burning their homes. "We would then watch French soldiers on television screens directing traffic while houses are burning," he said.

Bosnian Serb sources in Pale yesterday said Serb civilians have begun leaving suburbs to be handed over but described it as a trickle rather than a rush.

General Bachelet accused chief US negotiator Richard Holbrooke of seeking "to obtain at whatever cost an agreement to serve the electoral interests of an American candidate".

However, a UN spokesman in Sarajevo, Alexander Ivanko, said: "We at the higher com-

mand fully support the Dayton agreement".

It was the second time that France has questioned the Dayton pact. On Wednesday, President Jacques Chirac was reported to have written to Mr Clinton demanding guarantees for the Serbs living in Sarajevo.

A French newspaper said yesterday that the Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, had offered Paris help in freeing two detained French airmen in exchange for its support for a better deal for Sarajevo's Serbs. *Le Figaro* quoted Italian writer Daniel Salvatore Schiffer, a spokesman for Bosnian Serbs in the past, as saying: "Karadzic thinks he has a good chance of achieving the release of the pilots if Jacques Chirac makes a positive gesture".

A Foreign Ministry official in Paris insisted yesterday that there was no connection between Mr Chirac's letter to Mr Clinton and the fate of the missing flyers, shot down over Serb-held Bosnia in August.

Toddlers who crave love and cuddles

EMMA DALY
Tuzla

As orphanages go, Nasa Djeta seems a warm and friendly place: a few toys lie scattered about, a few pictures — abstract expressionism from the under-fives — are pinned to the walls. But the 40 children who live in three rooms above a kindergarten in the industrial town of Tuzla, in northern Bosnia, are starved of love and attention, traumatised by living through nearly four years of war and domestic conflict.

"The children have nothing," Melika Alijefendic, director of Nasa Djeta (Our Children), said. "We need so much for a normal life — a television and video, a car, a doctor..."

At present, the children are isolated at the home because they have no transport — even for trips to the hospital — and money for food will run out at the end of the year.

The charity War Child, founded in 1993 by two filmmakers (and parents) horrified by what they saw while covering the Croatian war, plans to supply food and a vehicle for the next year, with money raised from *Independent* readers. Funding the orphanage for 12 months will cost £80,000, and will ensure the children at least have a place to call home.

"There is a great difference between our children and those from the kindergarten: here it's almost impossible to keep any kind of order when food comes or visitors arrive. They want and need a bit more love," Jasminka Sinanovic explained.

Ms Sinanovic, a nurse, looks after the oldest group — three- to five-year-olds — who live in a large, cheerful room filled with furniture to scale: tiny tables and chairs, a row of miniature beds. There are a few toys and murals on the wall, small lockers and cups named for each child.



CHILDREN OF WAR APPEAL

The women working at Nasa Djeta frequently hug the children. There are a few toys and murals on the wall, small lockers and cups named for each child. But there is the same, inevitable and desperate need among the children for affection and attention.

Baric, a small blond boy, was cradled in the translator's arms. No one is sure what happened to his family, but they know he arrived at the orphanage as a tiny baby from the town of Brcko, which had fallen to the Serbs. Nirvana, dark and silent, is here with her sister because both her parents are in an asylum.

"They are not all orphans — some have been abandoned, or perhaps the mother is dead and the father in the army," Ms Alijefendic said. "One child's mother was raped [by Serb soldiers]. She did not abandon him, but her brothers, her family, would not let her bring the child home... so he is here."

The mother is able to visit only occasionally. But another woman did return to the orphanage recently to claim her son. "I think she was raped too," Ms Alijefendic said. "She has found a job, so she is able to raise her child."

Over the past couple of years the orphanage has managed to place around 30 children with adoptive parents, but new arrivals appear all too often.

One small girl whispers the word "mama" — every strange adult who appears is "mother" or "father" to these children, a triumph, for the majority, of hope over experience.



Reunited: Besir Jolic plays with his son Amir (right) and his niece Belma, 2, after a four-year separation. Belma's father died escaping from Srebrenica

Photograph: Kevin Weaver

INDEPENDENT CHILDREN OF WAR APPEAL

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8.2% APR
(variable)

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Alliance leadership: New Secretary-General faces crucial tests over Bosnia, expanding to the East and forging new ties with the EU

Spanish joy as Solana wins Nato job

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid
TONY BARBER
London

Spain's Foreign Minister, Javier Solana, was named yesterday as Nato's new Secretary-General, ending six weeks of embarrassing uncertainty over who should head the world's strongest military alliance.

Diplomats in Brussels said a consensus had formed around Mr Solana as the best man to replace Willy Claes, who resigned in October because of a corruption scandal in his native

Belgium. "We have a new Secretary-General", the US ambassador, Robert Hunter, said. "We are delighted by the selection of Mr Solana."

"The 16 support Solana," said Carlos Miranda, Spain's ambassador to Nato, after an informal meeting of the alliance's ambassadors. "This is a very good and important day for Spain."

The main barrier to Solana's appointment was removed on Thursday, when officials in Washington indicated the United States would throw its weight behind him, even though Spain

is not fully integrated into Nato's military command structure. Many European allies had already backed him.

Mr Hunter said: "Minister Solana has great potential to become an outstanding Secretary-General at a critical time."

Despite not being an official candidate, Mr Solana emerged as the front-runner for the job after the US effectively vetoed the former Dutch prime minister, Ruud Lubbers. Simultaneously, France and Greece did the same for the former Danish foreign minister, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen.

British officials dismissed as "totally without foundation" reports in the Spanish and British media that Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, had opposed Mr Solana because he campaigned against Spanish membership of Nato in the early 1980s.

However, 35 US Congressmen made public their opposition to Mr Solana this week when they told the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, in a letter, that it would be "totally inappropriate" to appoint him since Spain is not fully integrated into Nato's military command.

They said Mr Solana also was unsupportive of the US trade embargo on Cuba. State Department sources said Mr Christopher regarded him as a close friend who was deeply committed to strengthening US-European relations.

Mr Christopher meets Mr Solana in Madrid today. Mr Christopher arrives in Madrid before President Bill Clinton, who will sign a "transatlantic agenda" document with Jacques Santer, the President of the European Commission, and the Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzá-

lez, tomorrow. The "agenda" includes co-operation beyond traditional trade and security matters to include operations against terrorism and drug trafficking.

Mr Solana's departure would remove from the Spanish scene Mr Gonzalez's most likely successor as leader of an embattled Socialist Party that faces general elections in March. Mr Solana, has been close to Mr Gonzalez since the 1970s, and is the only minister remaining from the original cabinet formed in 1982 after the Socialists won a landslide election.

Although he had been a vocal opponent of Nato in the Seventies, as the government's spokesman he backed the 1986 referendum campaign in favour of Spain's continuing membership of the alliance.

Since the beginning of the war in the Balkans, he has advocated a tougher European line in the Balkans. Spain has become identified with the drive for greater EU defence integration.

Under Mr Solana's leadership, Nato will have to take crucial decisions concerning Bosnia, the question of mem-



Javier Solana: Gained US support at the last minute

bership for Central and Eastern European nations, and the forging of new links with the Western European Union, the EU's putative defence organisation. He will also be at the centre of efforts to create a European pillar for Nato, while not undermining the Atlantic link.

Papandreou's heirs wait on dying words

ANDREW GUMBEL
Athens

As Andreas Papandreou lies hooked up to lung and kidney support systems in an Athens hospital and the undeclared battle for his succession rages, one thought is haunting his would-be political heirs.

What if he ruins all the back-room negotiations and, in his dying breath, names his own successor as Prime Minister and leader of his socialist movement, Pasok? Even worse, what if the name he comes up with pleases nobody but himself and the man - or woman - that he designates?

One nightmare scenario, though admittedly an unlikely one, is that he will plump for Mimi, his glamorous but broadly disliked young wife who has jealously guarded over his private office for the past two years and who has been watching over him day and night since he entered hospital 12 days ago. One senior Pasok member was clear: "You never know the whims of

a dying man. But if he does that, we'll all pretend not to hear."

Mr Papandreou would not have to go so far, though, to sow the seeds of discord in party ranks. A name like Akis Tsochazopoulos, his loyal Interior Minister and official stand-in as prime minister, would also go down badly with many militants, who see him as a bully-boy, and would risk exacerbating the rifts that already exist between pro- and anti-Papandreou camps within Pasok.

Officially, government members insist Mr Papandreou is still in charge, even though he can communicate only through facial gestures and handwriting. "Last time I saw him communicating, three days ago, he wrote the words: 'I will survive,'" Telemachos Cytiris, the government spokesman, said.

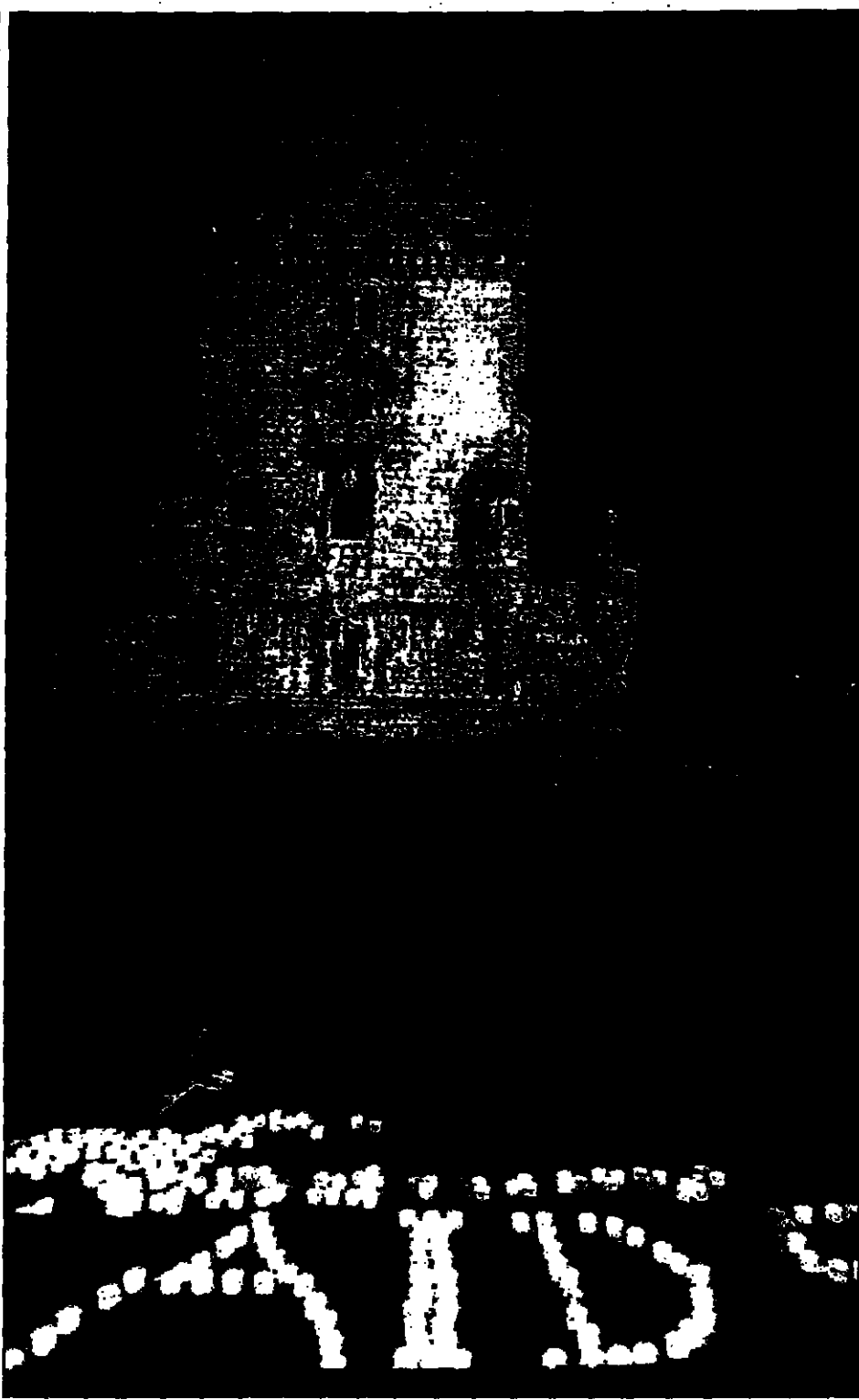
However, the latest thinking is that the roles of prime minister and party leader might be divided, with either Gerassimos Arsenis, the Defence Minister, or Costas Simitis, a leading Pasok dissident, taking the pre-

iership, and Mr Tsochazopoulos controlling the party. Mr Arsenis and Mr Simitis are economic specialists with a broadly pro-European outlook.

Time may be running out, since Mr Papandreou's doctors have been unable to take him off the artificial respirator that sustained him for most of last week and has done so again since Tuesday. Mr Papandreou also underwent a fourth course of kidney dialysis yesterday.

There is now talk of transferring the Prime Minister on to a more powerful heart-lung machine, or even of performing a tracheotomy to enable him to breathe independently through an opening in his throat. Neither prospect is reassuring for a frail 76-year-old with a history of serious heart problems.

Meanwhile, on the streets of Athens, the mood is turning to one of discomfort at Mr Papandreou's agony. "Why do they torture him like this? They should turn the machines off and let him die with dignity," one shopkeeper said.



Dying light: 2,700 candles in front of the Belem tower, in Lisbon, commemorate, on World Aids Day yesterday, those in Portugal who have died of the disease

Bolivia starts digging for Che's remains

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

For 28 years and 50 days, Bolivian domestic aircraft may have been landing on Che Guevara's remains at the dusty Vallegrande airstrip more than 400 miles south of the capital, La Paz.

Yesterday, officials began digging up part of the dirt runway for what is left of the Argentine-born revolutionary who became a worldwide Sixties symbol of social change after joining Fidel Castro in the Cuban revolution.

The Bolivians did not expect to find much. Che's hands were cut off after he was killed in 1967 and Bolivian army officers tried to burn his body before tossing him into a grave with other Marxist guerrillas. His thick black beard and wavy hair may help with identification.

Almost three decades later, President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada decided Ernesto "Che" (the Argentine version of "Buddy") Guevara's remains should be returned to his family for a Catholic burial.

Retired General Mario Vargas, 62, who as a 34-year-old army captain witnessed the secret burial at 11pm on 11 October 1967, led investigators from a presidential commission to the site. At first, he could not recall the spot but apparently had his memory jogged by two local people who had watched the night-time burial.

Although Bolivian army officers had put Che's body on public display in a Vallegrande hospital laundry room, and published famous photographs to prove to the world he was dead, they later panicked as the dead guerrilla's Christ-like im-

age as a corpse only increased his mystique. They buried him in a secret communal grave and remained silent until General Vargas led the presidential investigators to the site.

Trained as a doctor in Argentina, Guevara joined Fidel Castro's revolutionary forces in Mexico before landing in Cuba and helping to overthrow the dictator, Fulgencio Batista, in 1959. As Mr Castro's right-hand man, he served in the government before returning to Argentina to fight for Marxist revolution in 1964. In early 1967, he tried to "export the revolution" to Bolivia but was captured on 8 October that year, a useless, rusted carbine in his hands. He was shot the following day, his last words: "Go ahead and shoot. You are a coward but you are shooting a man."

Guevara has relatives in both Argentina and Cuba. His eldest daughter, Hilda, died of cancer at the age of 39 in Havana in August, leaving behind Che's grandson, Canek Guevara, a 21-year-old rock guitarist.

Cuba and left-wing politicians in Argentina have requested his remains. His hands, at first sent to Argentina for fingerprint checks, ended up in Cuba, where Mr Castro preserved and retained them in a secret vault.

Mr Castro has encouraged Guevara's martyr image even more than his own - Che's face looks down from buildings around Cuba and from ubiquitous T-shirts.

Way down in Vallegrande, the tourism potential is not lost on Mayor Hoover Cabrera. He wants Che's remains untouched and a Che museum at the "historic site".

Dirty-war inquiry blocked

Madrid — Spain's ruling Socialist Party, which has resisted opposition efforts to investigate its role in a dirty war against Basques in the 1980s, yesterday succeeded in killing a Senate inquiry that sought to question two former ministers, writes Elizabeth Nash.

The inquiry was set up three weeks ago to investigate whether the Socialist government had been responsible for the so-called Anti-terrorist Liberation Groups (GAL) — death squads. But the Socialists were able to muster the votes of the Catalan and Basque nationalists to reject plans to call Mr Gonzalez in connection with covert

operations during the early years of his premiership. The court is due to question Mr Barriounevo after parliament voted last week to lift his immunity as an MP. Mr Barriounevo will be called on suspicion of kidnapping, misuse of public funds and association with an armed band.

There has been much talk in the Socialist camp recently about the undesirability of having "parallel" inquiries. A number of judges warned that the parliamentary inquiry could clash with the judicial one, thus casting a shadow over the credibility of the Senate commission.

The collapse of the commission is an embarrassing setback for the conservative opposition Popular Party, which had called it into being.

The Supreme Court, which is conducting its own investigation into the GAL scandal, is pondering whether to call Mr Gonzalez in connection with covert

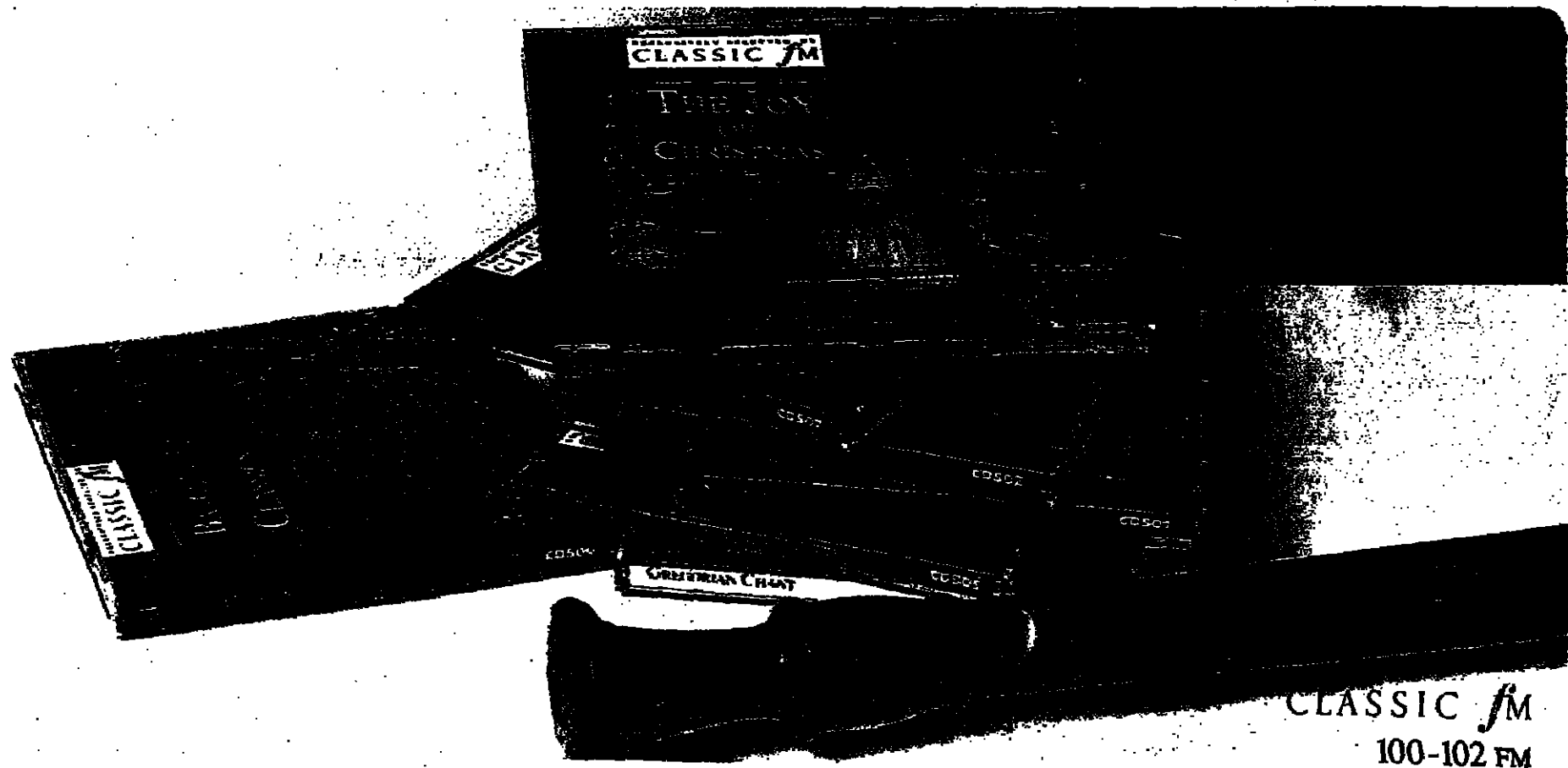
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Saudi king's illness stirs succession fears

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, who is 73, was being treated in hospital yesterday for an undisclosed medical condition, prompting speculation on the international oil markets about a succession crisis.

The Saudi monarch was taken to the King Faisal specialist hospital in Riyadh in on Thursday morning. He had just returned to the capital after several days in the desert.

"We are pleased to announce that all the check-ups conducted this morning on the custodian of the two Holy Shrines are reassuring and, thank God, he is enjoying health and fitness," a statement from the royal court said late on Thursday.

King Fahd is overweight, suffers from diabetes and uses a stick for walking because of a painful knee. He underwent gall bladder surgery last year.

In a departure from tradition, the monarch's admission to hospital was publicised on the front pages of Saudi newspapers, broadcast on state television and was carried by the official news agency. But his ailment was not revealed.

The uncertainties about Saudi Arabia beyond King Fahd stem more from the inner poli-

tics of the royal family than an external threat. The succession to the throne is brokered between the survivors among the 43 sons born by several wives to King Abdul Aziz, the founder of the kingdom, who lived from 1876 to 1953.

King Fahd's departure from the scene could cause uncertainty, because his brother and heir apparent, Crown Prince Abdullah, may face opposition among the 6,000 princes of the ruling dynasty.

In practice, modern court politics have been dominated by Fahd and his six full brothers born to Abdul Aziz's favourite wife, Hassa bint Ahmad Sudairi. The "Sudairi Seven" include the Defence Minister, Prince Sultan, the Interior Minister, Prince Nayef, and the governor of Riyadh, Prince Salman.

Some analysts believe the remaining Sudairi brothers would resist the succession of Crown Prince Abdullah, who is outside their ranks. Others believe the royal family could skip a generation and hand the throne to a figure such as the Western-educated Foreign Minister, Prince Saud, son of the assassinated King Faisal.

"I think Fahd's death means instability for the country because his designated successor, Abdullah, is also old and

unwell himself," said Said Aburish, author of a recent critical book about the kingdom.

King Fahd was shortly due to meet King Hussein of Jordan for the first time in five years, marking an important act of reconciliation after Jordan's estrangement from Saudi Arabia during the 1990-91 Gulf war. He was also expected to travel to Muscat, the capital of Oman, for

taken refuge in London, from where they campaign against his rule, denouncing it as corrupt.

Despite the abuse from the exiles, there is little sign of opposition in Saudi Arabia itself. The secret police and special security forces, armed and trained by the United States, keep hold of internal affairs. Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy whose constitution is the Koran, permitting neither freedom of assembly nor religious dissent.

But King Fahd has overseen a measure of liberalisation, channelling the views of prominent families and merchant interests through an appointed consultative assembly. His chosen title, "Custodian of the two Holy Shrines", or "Servant of the two Holy Places", was selected to emphasise the royal family's rule over Mecca and Medina, an important source of prestige in the Muslim world.

Saudi Arabia is the world's largest petroleum exporter, holding about a quarter of global oil reserves, and is a close ally of the US and Britain. The royal family is criticised by religious purists and has taken steps to deal with an economic crisis caused by declining oil revenues. A recent car bomb in Riyadh, which killed five Americans, underlined the potential for instability in the region.



King Fahd: Doubts centre on politics of royal family

a meeting of the Saudi-dominated Gulf Co-Operation Council next Monday.

Although in poor health, he appeared vigorous at a late night meeting three weeks ago with the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind. King Fahd complained about the activities of Saudi dissidents who have



Volcanic alert: Cyclists in Leon, north-west of the Nicaraguan capital, Managua, covering their mouths to avoid inhaling volcanic ash. The town is on red alert following the eruption of Cerro Negro. The authorities have advised everyone living nearby to take special precautions. Photograph: Brennan Linsley/AP

SA braced for 'truth' about its racist past

ROBERT BLOCK
Johannesburg

One-and-a-half years after the death of apartheid, South Africa is ready to examine its past. President Nelson Mandela this week named the 17 members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose job over the next 18 months will be to root out the crimes of the apartheid years. Work on the grim task will begin in the next few weeks.

Although the body is headed by the respected Nobel Prize-winner, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and although the former ruling National Party has accepted the appointment of the commission, there may be trouble ahead.

There are already rumblings which indicate that Archbishop

Worried. South Africa is hoping its experiment will somehow turn out differently.

For President Mandela and the country's black majority, the commission's work is essential for the future. For them there can be no reconciliation unless those responsible for apartheid-era crimes face up to their guilt. But for many conservative white South Africans, the past would be better forgotten and forgiven without the theatricals.

Whites, particularly Afrikaners, fear the commission will be little more than a one-sided tribunal seeking to punish their former leaders and generals. Many, like former president FW de Klerk, have said they will refuse to co-operate. They say Mr Mandela's commitment to reconciliation has been suspect since the arrest of General Magnus Malan and 10 senior officers for 13 apartheid-era murders.

The general and his co-defendants appeared in a Durban court yesterday to hear the charges detailed and will go on trial in March.

General Malan has become the main focal point for opposition in the Truth Commission. They say the general is proof that the President and his African National Congress (ANC) want to humiliate and punish only former government personnel while glossing over the excesses of their own people.

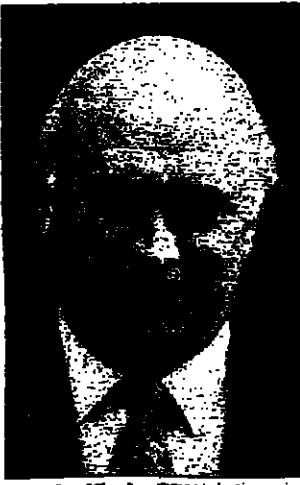
In a taste of the kind of political debate to come, Mr Mandela started a nasty round of mudslinging with his deputy, FW de Klerk, over the Malan case and the question of indemnity for former government officials.

The President has steadfastly refused appeals by Mr De Klerk to grant the "Malan 11" indemnity. Last weekend, Mr Mandela called Mr De Klerk "a joke" for suggesting that if the trial were to proceed, then "even-handedness" demanded that senior ANC officials who received indemnity from the last white-minority government should be prosecuted for their crimes.

The bitterness of the exchange led commentators to conclude that the government of national unity and the Mandela-De Klerk political marriage were on the rocks. Sensing trouble, Mr Mandela moved this week to defuse the row. He praised Mr De Klerk and told the media not to exaggerate differences between them.

"Our relationship is determined by our friendship, our respect for each other and added to that is the question of necessity. He needs me, I need him... like it or not that is the reality," the President said.

While there is little doubt that Mr Mandela needs Mr De Klerk to assuage white fears over black rule and provide financial stability in the white-dominated economy, there is a widespread belief that General Malan's trial and the Truth Commission's investigations could lead to revelations which would force Mr De Klerk to resign.



FW de Klerk bitter dispute with President Mandela

Tutu's panel is going to have a difficult time, and that its findings could shatter the pact under which whites and blacks have agreed to live side-by-side.

The commission panel is about more than exposing the abuses of white minority rule and the struggle to overthrow it. Its chief aim is to foster a national reckoning by uncovering the truth about the violence of the past, and in doing so, aid the healing of South Africa's psyche. It has the power to grant amnesty to those who offer "full disclosure" of past wrongdoings, or to recommend the prosecution of those who don't.

"I hope that the work of the commission is going to help to pour balm on wounds which we will open to cleanse so that they don't fester... so that we can then say let those bygone be bygones and let us now concentrate on... the future," Archbishop Tutu said.



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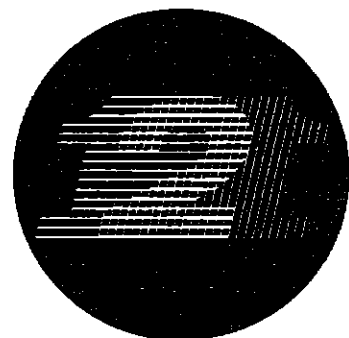
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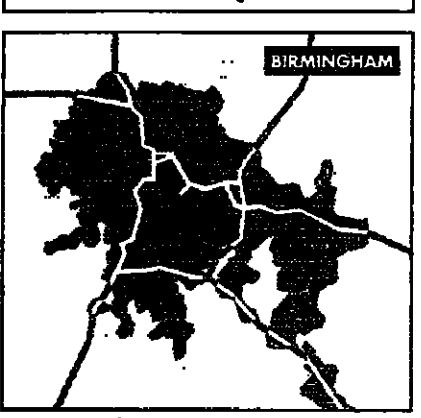
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international

China glowers as Taiwan goes to the polls

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

China's leaders must be facing increasing frustration in their attempts to influence today's legislative elections in Taiwan, the immensely wealthy offshore island which they regard as a renegade province.

First, they have no experience of democratic elections. Secondly, they are supposed to be indifferent to their outcome in Taiwan. Thirdly, they desperately want the Taiwanese voters to give the thumbs down to President Lee Teng-hui and others who are seen as encouraging the further separation of Taiwan from the Chinese mainland.

This probably explains why Shen Guofang, China's foreign ministry spokesman, was so evasive when questioned about whether the Chinese government was trying to influence the election by holding a series of threatening military exercises off Taiwan's coast.

The military action is backed up by Cultural Revolution-style rhetoric. On Tuesday the Peking-controlled *Wen Wei Po* newspaper in Hong Kong wrote in glowing terms of how, "for the sake of unification of the motherland, the Fujian (the province facing Taiwan) people will once again not grudge having to make sacrifices".

It may be no more than sabre-rattling. But the Hong Kong and Taiwan press are full stories of how the Chinese gov-

ernment has changed the criteria for dealing with Taiwan by military means. A widely leaked Chinese government document, allegedly from a Taiwan policy committee headed by President Jiang Zemin, states that the previous criteria for deciding on the need for an invasion should Taiwan declare independence is too narrow.

According to the document it is necessary to consider military means to counter "covert independence", which means President Lee's policy of perpetuating the division of the motherland, and deliberate procrastination in reunification talks. In these circumstances China would be justified in launching a small-scale military invasion to combat a small scale-independence movement.

The effect of all this military posturing in Taiwan has oscillated from extreme concern to indifference. The local stock market is more than ever like a roller-coaster as mood-swings are reflected in the price of shares.

Yesterday, President Lee hit back at China's threats, insisting: "The ballot is stronger than the bullet." He told a group of visiting US former senators and administration officials: "The military exercises... are negative, and the actions of Communist China are unwise."

A government official dealing with China relations said that he was aware of growing



Show of strength: Chinese ground, air and naval forces mounting a joint exercise this week in Fujian province, which faces Taiwan

pressure from the Chinese military for greater leeway in taking action against Taiwan, and was taking it seriously.

Lee Kuo-hsiung, a politics professor at the National

Chengchi University, said that although there was "an increased sense of risk", he believed that there were "weak reasons for military action" and he reckoned that China would

worry about the international reaction.

China's ham-fisted election strategy is to weaken both the outright pro-independence forces in Taiwan and the ma-

jority faction in the ruling Kuomintang Party, which it sees as backing President Lee's pro-independence line. China seems to be unaware that the Kuomintang is quite capable of

shooting itself in the foot without its assistance. Indeed, the threats from Peking may well have the effect of rallying support for a party which is deeply divided and surrounded by the

puerile aroma of corruption. The Kuomintang is now more openly split than at any time since Chiang Kai-shek brought his defeated forces to Taiwan in 1949.

Two leading members, the former prime minister, Hsu Pei-sun, and Lin Yang-kang, are declared runners in the March presidential election, the first in Taiwan's history.

Other senior Kuomintang officials have also entered the race against President Lee, including an 82-year-old former senior adviser to the President, Hsiao Kuo.

Meanwhile, the breakaway New Party, with an outspoken programme of reunification with the mainland, is making some headway among younger middle-class Kuomintang supporters and old-guard military stalwarts.

The splits in the ruling party will probably do little to prevent President Lee from being re-elected but they pose serious problems for the Kuomintang in today's poll. The pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party is rubbing its hands as the ruling party falls apart, and stands to make gains from a split in the conservative vote.

It is even possible that the Kuomintang will lose its overall majority in the legislature.

This would move Taiwan into uncharted waters, as the legislative and executive wings of government have never before been controlled by different parties.

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Ex-president could face death penalty

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Roh Tae Woo, the disgraced former president of South Korea, has chosen an intriguing book for his bedtime reading. Every night, before the lights go out in the Seoul Detention House, where he is being held pending imminent bribery charges, Mr Roh reads a few pages of the memoirs of Margaret Thatcher.

Broadly, there are parallels between the two former leaders: both presided over periods of boom in their country's economies, only to be stabbed in the back, as they saw it, by younger men whose careers they had nurtured. But if Mr Roh is looking for consolation, he will find little in *The Downing Street Years*.

While Baroness Thatcher promoted free-market monetarism and the small businessman, Mr Roh enriched Korea's giant corporations with a vigorous programme of state intervention and protectionism. While she was ousted by her own party, Mr Roh handed his presidency to a trusted successor in 1993. And if Lady Thatcher had the consolation of a peerage and a bag of lucrative directorships, Mr Roh has no such perks to look forward to.

After owning up in October to a huge personal slush-fund worth \$650m (\$420m), he stands a good chance of receiving a life sentence for corruption. Now, as the scandal widens, he faces an even grimmer possibility: death by hanging, on charges of treason and mass murder.

Amid mounting public hysteria, the government of President Kim Young Sam finished details this week of a new law which will allow Mr Roh and his predecessor, Chun Doo Hwan, to be prosecuted for the 1979 coup which brought them to power. Prosecutors have summoned Mr Chun for questioning today.

The coup, and the infamous Kwangju massacre, in which

hundreds of pro-democracy demonstrators were killed by paratroopers, occurred just outside the 15-year statute of limitations. Officials told journalists in Seoul that the constitution will be amended to overcome this obstacle.

A special law will then be drafted allowing for the prosecution of the coup leaders and their eventual execution.

Constitutional amendments must be approved by a national referendum but in the current atmosphere of hatred against Mr Roh there is little doubt that it would gain overwhelming public approval.

All week there have been daily demonstrations, some of them violent, calling for the prosecution of the two men. In Kwangju itself, 800 students fought riot police on Wednesday, and demanded an independent inquiry into both the slush-fund scandal and the massacre. Opposition parties accuse President Kim of hypocrisy in his pursuit of Mr Roh, who founded the ruling Democratic Liberal Party. "There is no change in the nature of Kim, who took power by joining hands with the slaughterers, Kwangju students shouted.

The crisis has provoked a more than usually tense atmosphere on the border with Communist North Korea. Yesterday, Mr Kim urged extra vigilance, saying that there had been worrying signs of North Korean activity. They are also building up fighter planes and bombers near the demilitarised zone [between the two countries], a spokesman quoted Mr Kim as saying. "We must firmly cope with any aggressive attempts by the North Koreans," he said. "Our political and social atmosphere could be read as a sign of a weakened security posture on our part."

Twenty-nine political activists campaigning for unity between the two countries have been arrested under the draconian national security law.

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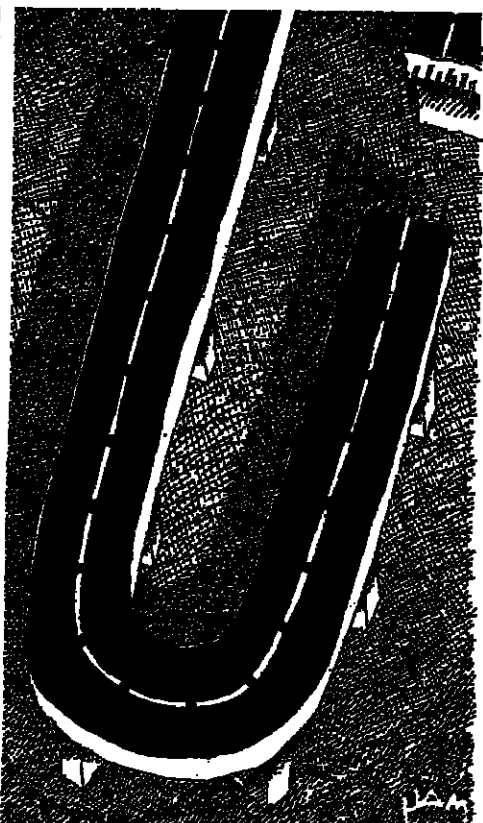
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The Government policy that was lost in transit

One of the great planks of Tory dogma was quietly, almost secretly buried last week when Kenneth Clarke and the Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, combined to ditch the Government's previously much-cherished road-building programme. The years of telling us that roads are essential for economic prosperity are now history. The war fought by the Dongas tribe of Twyford Down, the tree people of Bathurst as well as by the stout Tory ladies of Staines near the M25 has been won. The national road-building programme will now consist of a few dribs and drabs, the odd bypass or trunk road widening scheme.

It is a momentous event, yet it was deliberately hidden among all the other news of the Budget because it begs more questions than the Government at present is able to answer. Indeed, there was more than a touch of dishonesty about what happened on Budget day. The Chancellor, in his characteristic bluff way, spoke of an extra £500m for roads under the Private Finance Initiative. Even yesterday, when the BBC Today programme described the money as a "paltry extra £500m" for roads, the penny had still not dropped.

This is not extra money for roads – nor, as Sir George tried to depict it, just another way of bringing about the same level of roadbuilding. In fact, there has been a massive drop in the annual expenditure earmarked for national road schemes, from its peak of £2bn last year to £1.5bn, and we learnt in the Budget that it is to go on falling. But the more lasting effect, again revealed on Tuesday, is that under a review of



the programme 117 schemes, some 60 per cent of the total, have either been permanently abandoned or put on hold. As a result, barely a handful of schemes will be started between now and the general election.

The roads lobby was appalled at both the decision and the way in which it was disguised, calling it the "worst day for Britain's infrastructure since the Romans left". They are also sceptical of the Private Finance Initiative's ability to deliver any roads quickly.

This is the sad end of the whole vision behind the roads programme, which was first set out in a rather thin White Paper called *Roads to Prosperity* in 1989. The gist of the argument then was that Britain needed "a major expansion of the Government's programme for building and improving inter-urban roads" to "meet the forecast needs of traffic into the next century". These were heady times for the roadbuilding industry, as it seemed that the Government genuinely believed it could build itself out of the traffic congestion crisis.

The problem was that there was never any hope of doing so. Traffic was expected to rise by between 142 per cent and 834 per cent between 1988 and 2025, and there was never any chance of increasing the capacity of Britain's roads by that amount. Money was being pumped into a programme that at best stopped things getting worse quicker. Finally, the Treasury said no more.

Tuesday's events had been presaged in March, when Sir George's predecessor, Brian Mawhinney, abandoned plans to turn parts of the M25

into a 14-lane megahighway. Once it was accepted that even the busiest stretch of motorway in Britain could not be widened because of the uproar from the largely Tory local people, the policy of massive roadbuilding had nowhere to go. As we predicted at the time in March, all the motorway widening schemes have now been scrapped.

But why didn't Sir George proudly boast about his new policy, rather than slipping it through as part of the Budget? Because in representing such a massive U-turn it was simply too embarrassing, and to boot because he is offering nothing at its stead.

He made a few token comments about making "more efficient use of the roads we have", but this would cost a lot of money too. This is something they have discovered in Japan, where the Government has spent £120m creating a massive information system for Tokyo's roads. With a network of 13,000 sensors around the city to collect information on jams, and variable message screens on every street corner to relay the information, delays have been reduced by 8 per cent in the past 10 months. Soon drivers will be able to buy their own in-car screens to pick up the information themselves, and will be offered alternative routes with the aid of computerised maps.

Meanwhile, in Britain, we are waiting for the private sector to develop the infrastructure and pay for its installation, because the Government refuses to put in any seedcorn funding. Japan is already using technology to reduce congestion, while in Britain we are years away from even

starting pilot schemes. This will be a great missed opportunity, since Japanese equipment manufacturers will be in a position to flood our market in the same way they have done with cameras and Walkmans.

The destruction of the roadbuilding programme in the Budget signifies that transport policy has been taken over by the Treasury. If Sir George wants to retain his credibility, he needs to wrest back the initiative. Earlier this year, Dr Mawhinney launched a transport debate which seemed genuinely to be asking the right questions about transport policy.

When Sir George publishes the results of the debate, which he has said he will do early next year, he must do more than reiterate platitudes about congestion and actually suggest radical ways of tackling the crisis. He must actually begin to make difficult choices which will antagonise a lot of people, for example by restricting car parking in towns, reducing speed limits or turning over road space to cyclists.

Now that few new roads are to be built, it is only through such courageous measures that the inexorable clogging up of our roads can be halted. There is no shortage of examples from abroad where all sorts of well-tried schemes, ranging from measures to increase bus usage to building light rail systems, are being implemented. Some of these are cheap, others cost a lot of money. Sir George must now let the Treasury have its way by stopping roadbuilding, but in return he has to persuade them to cough up for alternative transport policies that will stop the steady drift towards gridlock.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Symbolic cuts to lone parents

From Professor Ruth Lister
Sir: Hamish McRae (29 November) refers to the Chancellor's "carefully neutral statement on single parents – that they should be treated in the same way as couples with children, not specially favoured". There is, though, nothing "neutral" about the decision to phase out the modest additional help provided to lone-parent families, both in work and out of work through one-parent benefit and the lone-parent premium, nor about the Budget of which it is a part.

The Chancellor justified this decision on the basis that "the cost and responsibilities of having children are the same for couples as they are for single people". Ten years ago, this Government published a Green Paper on social security reform in which it made the case for the lone-parent premium, which replaced a long-term rate paid after a year, on the grounds of the "greater needs" of and "extra pressures" faced by lone parents. Similarly, it proposed continuing one-parent benefit "as a contribution to the additional costs faced by lone parents in bringing up children alone".

I am not aware that the difficulties faced by lone parents compared with couples raising

children have eased over the past decade. If the Government has research which underpins this significant change in policy, it should publish it. In the absence of such research, one can only conclude that what has changed is the political saliency of lone parents as the Chancellor came under pressure from the Right of his party to do something to shore up the traditional two-parent family.

It is unlikely that they really believe that such measures could affect current family trends. Instead, they amount to a piece of punitive symbolism, but a piece of symbolism which will gradually push many lone parents and their children further into poverty. Ironically, the removal of the non-means-tested one-parent benefit could serve to undermine the more welcome proposals to make it easier for lone parents to move into full-time paid employment. However, even these proposals will have only limited effect so long as the Government refuses to invest in our inadequate child care facilities.

Yours sincerely
RUTH LISTER
Professor of Social Policy
Department of Social Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough, Leicestershire
30 November

What does Hirst's udderless cow mean?

From Ms Barbara Spring
Sir: The contemporary art sceptics will have all their doubts and hates confirmed by this year's Turner Prize choice ("Enfant Terrible" Hirst wins the spot prize", 29 November). I, too, but particularly because of a problem with the inherent nature of the work.

Anyone who has seen a cow must have a problem with Damien Hirst's cow. The poor divided creature accompanied by a calf could never have suckled any child, being to all appearances perfectly udderless: the full bag of rich and beautiful milk that gives life to calf and child, that makes a cow a cow, is simply not there.

Having given the work a name ("Mother and child divided": cow and calf) the viewer presumes the artist intends something meaningful about the work. What does this udderless cow mean? Is there a hidden agenda here: is it a cynical joke? Is it an existential exercise? Or, after the calf had been paid for, did funds not run to a full milking cow so an immature heifer was bought instead?

Once one has seen the problem one suspects a fraud; if there is not integrity in a work considered to be so important, whatever are the values of both

artist and critic? I am having real trouble in suspending my disbelief, and await the explanation from the pundits hopefully, in order that understanding may be awakened appreciation. Yours sincerely,
BARBARA SPRING
Saltash, Cornwall
29 November

From Mr Paul Gynor
Sir: As one of the protesters at the Tate Gallery this Monday who temporarily prevented people exercising their right to view two dead carcasses, I must express my disappointment at the moral bankruptcy of the judges of the Turner Prize and the winning artist.

However you view the exhibit, given the chance, it increased the demand for dead animals by two, created unnecessary suffering and death and cheapened the life of a mother and child.

Apparently the judges were impressed by the artist's ability to deal with the issues of life and death. To give a more cutting edge to the subject, may I suggest that in his next piece he merely directs people to their local slaughterhouse where they can really experience the horrors awaiting the 750 million animals that we kill every year to satisfy our crav-

ing to consume animal flesh. A true artist should be able to represent life and death – not be the cause of it. Justice may yet be done should the artist be reincarnated as a dairy cow. Yours sincerely,
PAUL GYNOR
Office Manager
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
London, NW1
29 November

From Mr W. K. Harper
Sir: In her eulogy of Damien Hirst's work (29 November) Louise Buck says "he produces images that lodge themselves in the psyche ... at the same time mundane and massive ... spectacle with profound meditations ... his work grabs you by the throat ... it proves that art can be funny, poetic and profound ... it is as simple or as complex as you want it to be." All this in praise of a blown-up textile pattern or perhaps an arrangement of Smarties done in an idle moment? Very profound.

Incidentally, how does a calf preserved in "deadly poison" have "eternal life"? Yours sincerely,
W. K. HARPER
Tunstall,
Stoke-on-Trent
9 November



'Mother and child divided': How does a calf preserved in poison have 'eternal life'? Nick Turpin

Call for clarity on Nigeria debate

From Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi
Sir: Regarding the ongoing debate on your pages between Anita Roddick (Another View, 28 November) and your correspondents (Letters, 1 December) on Shell and Ogoniland, the central issue seems to be getting out of focus.

The real issue is: are the operational standards of Shell in the Delta area of Nigeria comparable to its operational standards in other parts of the world – especially in the developed world? From all available reports, including those of your correspondent in Nigeria, David Orr (30 November and 1 December), the standards of Shell fall below what would be accepted in Europe and the US.

It is no defence for anyone to argue that a multinational operating in the Third World has to conform to the Third World business environment. The consequence of such an argument is that when nationals of a

Third World country and the international community become outraged at the business environment of that country, multinationals which have become part of the environment cannot claim innocence. That is the case with Nigeria, Shell and Ogoniland.

The solution is an international convention stipulating that multinationals are under an obligation to have comparable operational standards all over the world. As a first step, western countries should legislate that multinationals registered in their countries should conform to western operational standards in their operations in the Third World, just as the US Congress has legislated that US corporations cannot engage in corrupt practices abroad. That some will always break the law should not deter serious consideration of this approach.

Yours sincerely,
A. BOLAJI AKINYEMI
London, W2
The writer is a former Nigerian Foreign Minister, now with the pro-democracy movement in Nigeria.

And top o' th' morning to ya

From Mr David Craig
Sir: Please inform John Walsh (Diary, 30 November) that the people of Belfast do not speak as if they require a decongestant!

I am afraid that he is guilty of typicating all "Irish" accents as resembling a Dublin brogue.

An Ulster accent is very distinct compared to one from the South, as I am sure one would gather from news items.

What will he have next week; us all drinking Guinness, eating potatoes, and saying, "By Gerrah, and top o' th' morning to ya"?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID CRAIG
Belfast
30 November

I'm sorry, I haven't a queue

From Mr G. Meynell
Sir: I am having trouble with Health Service ethics. Is it wrong to use my money to jump the queue (as I grew up thinking) or wrong to clog the queue if I can afford to pay?

I suppose all *Independent* readers but me believe the latter, but I am confused. Yours faithfully,
G. MEYNELL
Derby
27 November

Organised fun

From Ms Catherine Ennis
Sir: I was interested to read David Lister's article (17 November) describing a whole range of activities in London that are free of charge. Surprisingly, he omitted one of the longest running traditions in free events to be had in London – the organ recital.

In the Square Mile of the City of London 100 years or so ago, lunchtime organ recitals were provided as an oasis of calm and inspiration for City employees. Today's audiences also include tourists and those who take in a concert as part of a day's outing to town. Here too is often a sanctuary for eat-

ing a packed lunch. High-quality organs abound, despite a decline in church-going and therefore career opportunities.

More than in any other city in the world, a plethora of glorious music on fine organs in superb historic settings awaits the visitor to London, and not just in the City itself. From SW1 (Westminster Cathedral) to NW1 (St Marylebone Parish Church), W1 (Grosvenor Chapel) to SE1 (Southwark Cathedral), you can catch an organ concert each day of the week. Yours faithfully,
CATHERINE ENNIS
Organist, St Lawrence Jewry
next Guildhall
London, EC2

Off the Budget

From Mr William Rice
Sir: I wish to express my disgust at the Budget proposal to reduce the amount of housing benefit paid to those, like myself, who are under 25 and live in private rented accommodation.

The proposal is designed to be an incentive to work. I visit the job centre twice a day, every day, and have applied for countless jobs without success. I am not unemployed by choice. To anyone under 25 the message is clear, ensure you've got a job, because if you dare lose it, the state will clobber you. Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM RICE
Port Glasgow

Duty to the truth

From Ms Anna Freeman
Sir: Virginia Ironside (Dilemma, 30 November) perpetuates the lie that Father Christmas isn't a lie but a myth, and indeed that myths aren't lies at all. It may be all right for parents, and adults in general, to repeat myths that they believe are true, such as God and heaven; but it is surely wrong to repeat myths that we know are false. I find it shocking that any responsible person should seriously argue in favour of telling children deliberate lies.

Yours faithfully,
ANNA FREEMAN
Leighton Buzzard

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Love thy whinger



Stop! Restrain yourself. Bottle it up. If thy neighbour offends thee, forget it. Should he nick your dustbin, offer him your compost heap. Otherwise you risk becoming one of those whose minor irritations turn inexorably into savage hatreds, whose lives are devoted to petty acts of aggrandisement and revenge.

Almost every day we read of neighbours who fall out because of the noise made by pet rabbits or, in one famous case, the intolerable racket made by next door's breeding hamsters (was there, perhaps, a bewhiskered Meg Ryan equivalent, given to crying out "Eeeee, eeee, eeeee" at the point of rodentine climax?).

This week we have had the latest instalment in a 16-year hedge battle between pensioners Charles Stanton and Michael Jones. Back in 1971, when Edward Heath was Prime Minister and T Rex were in the charts, Mr Stanton planted a row of fast-growing conifers at the bottom of his garden. Mr Jones watched as, over the years, the plants grew to 25ft, blotting out the sun's rays and casting his own garden into Stygian gloom.

In 1979, friendly discussion having failed, Mr J took action and solicitor's letters were exchanged. Meanwhile, the cypresses shot above the 30ft mark. Eventually, Mr S grudgingly consented to the trees being reduced to 22ft, thus safeguarding his privacy against all but the laziest of griffins.

But six years ago, the dispute took a new twist. Mr J decided that 15ft was a better height, took the saw into his own hands, and lopped off a further 60 inches. And then another 48 inches.

Maggie went, the Gulf war was fought, Yugoslavia imploded. Over in Bournville, injunctions were being granted and courts were giving rulings. Peace broke out in Ulster and finally, on Thursday, Mr Stanton lost his last case. He now faces a bill for £50,000 in costs.

If Mr Jones has shown remarkable persistence, Mr Stanton's behaviour represents one of the Psychological Wonders of the modern world. It is

obstinacy taken to religious extremes – a life and a fortune spent preserving a few ridiculously tall plants from a much-needed cutting. Why on earth did he do it?

The answer is no doubt logical in its own terms, however hard it may be to sympathise with. Mr S may have believed in the inalienable rights of shrubs to grow, and regarded tampering with them as interfering with nature.

Or perhaps he reasoned that Mr Jones's secret pruning broke a solemn compact proving that the former teacher was one of those who, given an inch, would take a mile. A man who can surreptitiously take an axe to his neighbour's hedge will think nothing of encroaching on his boundaries and invading his garden. Sooner or later there would have been elderly orgies among the Stanton peonies and wrinkled rumbles between the ramblers.

But Mr Stanton also almost certainly engaged in this dispute because he enjoyed it. The hedge row gave social shape and context to his life, where otherwise it might have been empty. Deprived of retirement of his power and influence, the hedge has been the focus of his considerable emotional and organisational energy. Bluntly, he had nothing better to do.

If so, the obvious remedy is displacement therapy: give the likes of Mr Stanton something else to worry about. Judges and magistrates should, for instance, have the power secretly to add such people to the panels of listeners and viewers employed by the BBC to provide feedback on programmes. This would give most of them enough to whinge about until the Grim Reaper comes a-calling.

If this fails, they should be compelled to host their own late-night chat show on local talk radio, where they can give vent to their feelings about the world – about horn-toting cables, illicit conifer cutters, horny hamsters and all the other thousand natural shocks that English flesh is heir to.

Not only will this keep them out of the courts, it might also entertain the rest of us at the same time.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

Words can be sexy and eyes can be sexy. I don't think you need to see naked bodies writhing around all the time – Meg Ryan, one of a growing number of film actresses who won't strip for the camera. I cannot remember when I last saw a film, but I am told it is important nowadays to have a lot of nudity to make it sell to the public – Viscount Devereux, Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire.

The cut is nonsensical, totally irrational and deeply boring – Stephen Daldry, artistic director of the Royal Court Theatre, London, on the £5m cut in the Arts Council budget.

The trouble with being off the drink is that you remember clearly the next morning what you did the night before, and when you're off the drink there's nothing worth remembering from the night before – Richard Harris, actor and reformed hell-raiser.

I could play Camilla Parker-Bowles. I could ugly up for that – Joan Collins, when asked if she would star in a royal soap opera. It was as if Brady and Hindley had got married and kept killing for 20 years – Howard Souness, author of the first book on the West End Marriage, not cohabitation, is the institution which is at the heart of the good society and let us not be reluctant to say so as a Church – The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Keeping the faith – and no messing

Dr George Carey is not the type to stand by while his church sanctions living in sin, says Andrew Brown

It is a curious commentary on the state of the Church of England that the Archbishop of Canterbury should make front-page news by announcing that marriage is preferable to cohabitation. Yet Dr George Carey has just reaped his most sustained harvest of favourable publicity since he was chosen by Mrs Thatcher, by speaking up this week in defence of the conventional family at the General Synod.

It was not the first time Dr Carey has defended marriage: at the time of the David Mellor scandal he urged adulterous cabinet ministers to resign, on the grounds that anyone who systematically deceives his wife is not to be trusted in other areas of life. But this time his words had added dramatic effect, because he was rebuking his own church for producing a report advocating the abandonment of the use of the phrase "living in sin".

The problem the report was trying to tackle was that some evangelical priests have been refusing to marry couples who live together if they do not perform a public act of repentance, and even refusing to baptise their babies. But in criticising that puritanism, the report

inable" that he should ever be unfaithful to his wife Eileen. This sort of loud self-confidence comes naturally to him. It is one of the qualities that makes him attractive to the evangelicals who lobbied hard for him as successor to Robert Runcie in 1990. Carey's appointment came as a big surprise: he had only been a diocesan bishop for two and a half years, and was a generation younger than most of the men tipped for the succession.

His self-confidence immediately dropped him into a succession of diplomatic disasters: he said some opponents of women priests were guilty of "a very grave heresy"; his first visit to the Sudan led to the expulsion of the British ambassador there; on a trip to China he condemned bible-smuggling, which is a traditional Christian response to totalitarianism.

But nothing dents his brash approach for long. Last week he announced that he was to visit Sarajevo, to express his solidarity with the people there. Never mind the fact that there aren't any Anglicans in Sarajevo, Dr Carey sees himself as a world spiritual leader, as he told the United Nations in September:



Carey's vision: vicar to the nation and world spiritual leader

Edward Sykes

ing and shrunken church. But it is all of a piece with the church through which he rose. He was born in London's East End in 1935, the second of five children; his family, he says, were what the Bible would call God-fearers. "They took their membership of the Church of England quite seriously, even if they didn't actually go," he told the author Mary Louden, with

book, the congregation was full of earnest high-mindedness, and the vicar was known by a silly nickname (Pit-Pat). He now dislikes the label of evangelical, but his entire career in the Church of England has been within evangelical parishes or theological colleges; and his supporters are almost without exception evangelicals themselves.

The term "evangelical" has little doctrinal meaning left. It is more a matter of style. When an archbishop says, as this one did yesterday, that life as an Anglican ought to be "tremendously exciting, tremendously important, and tremendously full of surprises," you might expect a wave of embarrassment to run around the old-fashioned Church of England like a Mexican cringe. But gentlemanly self-deprecation is old-fashioned now. The strength of evangelicals is now their confidence with power and modernity; their churches have the newest computer systems. They don't expect to be in decline, even when they are: they believe that the right combination of technique and prayer will put the church back on the road to growth.

What they don't believe in is soft-headed accommodation to modern secular trends, however close to home those may be. Two of Dr Carey's own four children have been through divorces and one is remarried. "None has cohabited though. And the whole family has stayed churchy: one son is a curate; one works on the Church of England Newspaper, and one is a steward at the Archbishop's palace in Canterbury."

Dr Carey's confidence in the face of modern society's muddled values speaks to his battered church. Its membership is still declining, but an optimist can point to the 200 churches planted in the past six years. Nearly 300 priests have left over the ordination of women; but an optimist points out that this number is far fewer than threatened to leave.

For decades the Church of England has been attacked for equivocation, over-sensitivity, and unnecessary intellectual refinement. Carey is heretic of these faults, and their concomitant virtues. He knows what he wants for the church and for the nation: "We have to get back to the kind of basic standards which come from a strong Christian tradition and strong churches which are making their contribution to the life of our nation." Here is the certain trumpet. Will anyone be listening?

It was all a matter of nuance, but he saw the opportunity for firm leadership and grabbed it with both hands

appeared to be saying that the Church of England should fully accept cohabitation.

It was all a matter of nuance, but Dr Carey saw the opportunity for firm leadership and grabbed it with both hands: the public hearing he administered to the report was quite unprecedented, and left the Bishop responsible house with pain and anger in his response.

Dr Carey himself has been married since the age of 24; he once told an interviewer that it was "unimag-

and though half the Church of England winces with embarrassment at such pushiness, the other half loves every minute.

As Archbishop, he carries on exactly like the go-getting vicar he was when he first impressed a powerful evangelical clique in Durham in the Seventies. Indeed, a recent church report described his office as "vicar to the nation" as well as "world spiritual leader". It is both a grandiose and a shrunken vision that may turn out to fit a flounder-

characteristically optimistic spin.

When he was four, his family moved to Dagenham in Essex, but he still refers to himself as an East Ender, and his appreciation of old-fashioned working class communities and their values shines through all his comments on society. He failed his eleven plus and left school at 15 with no qualifications.

At the age of 18 he became a committed Christian in an old-fashioned evangelical church, where the worship was straight from the prayer

Glamour for Everygirl

Tamsin Blanchard examines the lasting magic of the *Clothes Show*

It is a Girl's World come to life, a non-stop whirlwind of glamorous clothes, makeovers by hair and make-up teams, catwalk shows, bright lights, pulsating music, camera flash, leggy models and, to top it all, the Cheshire Cat grin of fashion king Jeff Banks. The *Clothes Show Live* event at Birmingham's NEC started yesterday and by the end of the weekend will have attracted almost 250,000 schoolgirls, their older sisters, their boyfriends and mothers. Dreams come true at *Clothes Show Live*. There is always the possibility of being scooped from the crowd and on to the world's largest catwalk, alongside superstar models like Jodie Kidd and Marcus Schenkenberg. It's designed to leave all participants on a high.

But behind the glossy lipstick and the shimmering eyeshadow, the *Clothes Show Live* is big business. For many designers, it is as important as the trade shows held at the same venue twice a year. This weekend the designers get to meet their market and, more importantly, where their market gets to meet them. Last year £2.250 was spent every minute and by the end of the six-day period, visitors had parted with £8m.

For many designers, the annual event comes at a perfect time. They have just finished selling their collections for next summer and the event boosts cash flow in the run up to Christmas. In a business that is all about hype and marketing, it is the greatest promotional event of all with a captive market, over half of whom are young women aged 16-25.

The BBC's *Clothes Show* programme (there is also a highly successful spin off magazine) is 10 years old next year. It is something of a mystery to the TV executives who can't quite comprehend how the mix of high street bargains, designer frocks, and wedding dresses picks up some eight million viewers – 39 per cent of the audience share on Sunday afternoon.

When Jeff Banks, then running his successful Warehouse

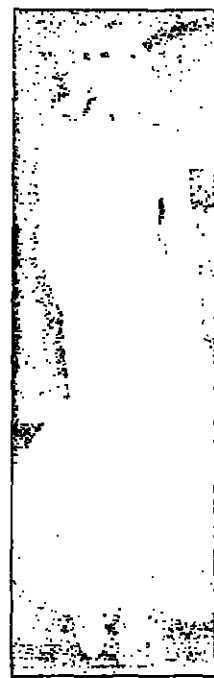
chain, and television producer Roger Casstles made the first pilot of the *Clothes Show* in 1983, it took them three years before it was actually accepted. "No one wanted it," says Banks. "But I was obsessed about getting fashion on television." His status as an industry insider and his slightly camp brand of enthusiasm are both essential to the show's formula.

The first show went out in 1986 and after only three programmes, its success was obvious. The appeal of the programme is not just the presenters, it's the inimitable thrust that the public has for the subject. Banks says. It was the first programme to treat fashion in any depth and it still, if not the only, one of a sparse handful of nationally networked fashion programmes in the world.

Before *The Clothes Show*, ordinary people felt intimidated by fashion. Jeff Banks and the other presenters have introduced the public to designers whose clothes most people can never hope to afford. The clothes are made accessible, modelled by real people and catwalk trends are

translated for people whose lives do not revolve around hem lines. The show aims to include everyone, from brides (the Bride of the Year competition allows the winner to have a designer wedding) to the brownies (Jeff Banks redesigned their uniforms on-screen). This is fashion at its most basic, grassroots level.

By focusing on the personalities in the industry as much as the clothes, it has become a kind of Top of the Pops, a formula that appeals to everyone (except for the snobbish fashion elite who tend to sneer). Ten years ago, the woman in the street would not have known who John Galiani was. Now, the designer is recognised in the street by autograph hunters. And while the postbags at the *Clothes Show's* Birmingham office keep on piling up, Jeff Banks' vision has paid off. On the fashion catwalk at the NEC, the music explodes, the models sashay and the crowds roar.



Jodie Kidd walks the catwalk at the *Clothes Show Live*

A formula for reviving Irish spirits

Bill Clinton's visit was a great excuse for a great party. But it meant more, says David McKittrick

Belfast, as somebody once remarked, is not at all a typical Irish city: it has more in common with the Scottish or northern English cities that sprang up with the industrial revolution, and shares many of their characteristics.

In one of its aspects it is tough, dour, grumpy, with a take-it-or-leave-it attitude, a city of no airs and graces – personified, in fact, by Van Morrison, who this week served as the warm-up act for Bill Clinton at his city hall.

That facet has been to the fore ever since the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, which were greeted with a mixture of relief and caution. It took the presidential visit to liberate another of the city's aspects, at last allowing it to show its warm, welcoming, even joyous face.

In doing so, the visit not only provided the occasion for a release of goodwill but also consolidated and cemented the peace process. It was more than just a great party: it may turn out to be a truly historic turning point, for in a single day almost all of the lingering doubts about the peace were swept away.

Many trials and obstacles will have to be surmounted in the months and years ahead, but this week's events have immeasurably strengthened the process. The preceding weeks had produced a series of ever-gloomier assessments from republicans, and latterly from security sources. Both elements warned that the process was becoming unstable as the arms decommissioning impasse dragged on. Tuesday night's Anglo-Irish summit, since overshadowed by the Clinton visit, did much to relieve the pressures. Even in the absence of agreement between Dublin and London, its carefully balanced formula set up an international body on decommissioning and moved towards talks. It was, in effect, an offer that, politically, Sinn Féin and the IRA could not refuse and, for the moment at least, it dispelled most of the dangerous tensions.



Clinton in Northern Ireland: the signs are that US involvement will reassure all parties

Photograph: F. Spooner

While the ingenious intricacies of the summit communiqué have supplied a technical framework for the next few months, the Clinton visit delivered an extraordinary injection of momentum, enthusiasm, fresh heart and new spirit. His message that the violence was over for good was radiated back to him from the thousands who stood in the cold to hear him and cheer him.

On 31 August, on the first anniversary of the IRA cessation of violence, the streets in front of the city hall were empty: no one felt able to celebrate. On Thursday night, with Clinton as the catalyst, tens of thousands clapped, cheered, waved their US flags and finally allowed their

feelings to come out into the open.

The fact that the crowd was made up of both Catholics and Protestants is a tribute to Clinton's political skills. Throughout 1994, his name was mud with Unionists as, in the face of stiff British opposition, he granted Gerry Adams visas to visit the States and allowed him to fund-raise there (a boon that has netted Sinn Féin hundreds of thousands of dollars and has probably made it Ireland's richest political party).

Clinton's is the first US administration to make a serious study of the politics of Northern Ireland, and certainly the first to intervene in them. No American president had ever visited Northern Ireland before this week. JFK

deciding in 1963 not to venture north of the border.

This was largely because American administrations were perceived as pro-Irish nationalists. Indeed, many saw Clinton in this light in 1994. Since then, however, his position has evolved considerably: he has made particular efforts to mend fences with London while, as he demonstrated in Dublin yesterday, remaining on good terms with the Irish government.

His warmest praise was reserved for SDLP leader John Hume, who clearly has a major input into American decision-making. But Clinton has also made a special effort to build bridges to Unionist leader David Trimble and

establishing relations with loyalist paramilitary groups.

Keeping all sides in the conflict reasonably happy is no easy task, but the tumultuous welcome he received in Belfast and Londonderry showed he has succeeded in doing so. (His coolest reception, from the Rev Ian Paisley, is regarded as pretty much par for the Paisley course.)

Clinton's popularity was not earned by retreating into anyone's generalisations about peace. The most important messages in his speeches this week were that the violence must be over for good and that formerly violent prodigals should be welcomed into politics. He declared in Belfast: "You must be willing to say that those who renounce violence are entitled to be part of the democratic process."

In emphasising this last week he voiced no criticism of the British government but made it clear that his approach is the speedy construction of an inclusive settlement. In doing so he places more emphasis on the need for dialogue than London has displayed.

In his approach Clinton is of course hopeful of netting Irish-American votes, but his analysis goes much deeper than that. He, like Dublin, believes that the best way to deal with republicans is to draw them over-deeper into the political net. He believes his decision to allow Adams into the States was vindicated in that it helped facilitate the IRA ceasefire.

The appointment of his close friend and ally George Mitchell as head of the decommissioning body is an indication that the US will remain a major player in the peace process. Many Unionists and many in Britain may have instinctive reservations about continuing US involvement, but the fact is that it is here to stay. This week all the signs were, from the people on the streets of Belfast, that they wholeheartedly approve of the fact that their peace process has become an international issue.

Good-bye battery



Seiko Kinetic®. The first and only quartz watch that generates its own energy from your every movement. The perpetual accuracy of quartz – naturally, without a battery. Its tiny powerhouse converts even your slightest movement into electrical impulses. Ecologically sound and ultimately reliable. Seiko Kinetic is so efficient that you only need to wear it for one day to ensure enough energy reserves to last at least a week. Wear it continually and it will never let you down. It's built to last. Someday all watches will be made this way.

SEIKO KINETIC

obituaries / gazette

Simon Wolff

Last month the Chancellor of the Exchequer increased duties on super unleaded petrol. He did it because of Simon Wolff. In June 1994, Wolff convinced the House of Commons Transport Committee that unleaded petrol, especially super unleaded, replaced lead with yet more dangerous levels of cancer-causing aromatics.

This shooting down of a supposed "green fuel" repeated his feat when he was the first UK scientist to show, loud and clear and by evidence-based argument, that diesel fuel, by its residue of fine particles, causes more problems than it solves. As he sardonically said to MPs: "the switch to diesel which is now taking place may well be a large-scale experiment in lung cancer".

Simon Wolff combined, as few do, campaigning zeal and campaigning success with true academic integrity. Of course the oil lobby were unhappy with his torpedoing of two of their carefully advertised "green fuels". But this did not make him yet another Identikit Green bore: rather he was distinct from most Greens in not falling for technical fixes such as unleaded fuels and catalysts when what was needed was to stop building new roads.

His work at the Medical School of University College London, where he worked first as Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer in Toxicology, from 1986, centred round the degenerative effect of free radicals and oxidants generally in the context of diabetes and ageing. His work was internationally recognised: he had over a hundred papers, and publications in *Nature* magazine and elsewhere, and contributed to many international



Wolff: 'Why build more roads?'

conferences. The outcome of his work could be drugs to reduce the danger for diabetics of cataract or even ways to slow the ageing process.

Simon Wolff was active in public from the time when in 1973, as a schoolboy (at Rugby School), he helped rescue Harold Wilson from drowning while he was boating off the Isles of Scilly where Wilson had a cottage. When Linda Hallan (whom he married in 1983) and he moved to Archway Road, in Highgate, north London, in the late Eighties they found a battle under way against the Department of Transport's planned Archway motorway. A determined campaign had beaten off the department through four public inquiries: now officialdom branched out into a planned all-London network of new roads.

Wolff's thinking was, as always, unusual in being direct and simple: if more traffic means more pollution, why build more roads? Apparently a simple thought, but one shied away from by political parties and professional environmentalists. Wolff absorbed the

Archway spirit: intellect and fighting on the barricades. You need something to say—but you also need courage to say it whether or not officialdom deems it the right time and place. In 1990, a battered Cecil Parkinson, then Minister for Transport, conceded defeat for the first time in a quarter of a century. Archway was safe and it was Wolff who helped make it so.

Scientists have dogmas as much as politicians or priests, but Wolff never minded a clear-eyed look. His distrust of Pavlovian reactions to radioactivity and when it was reported that areas with more radon (a radioactive gas) have higher cancer levels (with the inference that the level of cancer was connected to the level of radon), he showed that these areas were usually economically better off. More car-driving with increased ingestion of benzene, not radon, he argued, would have increased cancer levels. Again, he suspected that laying all the blame on the door of radon was a move to exculpate worse pollutants: notably transport fumes, and would say, "If stop smoking if you stop driving."

George Stern

Simon Paul Wolff, toxicologist and campaigner: born Harborough Magna, Warwickshire 3 March 1957; post-doctoral research fellow, Brunel University, London 1984-86; Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Ophthalmology, Columbia University, New York 1984-86; Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer in Toxicology, University College Medical School, London, 1986-95; married 1988 Linda Hallan (one son, one daughter); died London 25 November 1995.

Frank d'Abreu

Frank d'Abreu gave unstinted service for 23 years to Westminster Hospital and Medical School.

D'Abreu was a skilful, delicate, gentle and speedy surgeon with whom anaesthetists liked to work—a good recommendation. He was not an "academic" but full of sound clinical judgement. Above all he had the surgical equivalent of "green fingers", so that patients did well even when the complexities of the surgery were great. In no way a prima donna in the operating theatre, he had an idiosyncratic way of challenging his assistants to prevent any mishap—a method of teaching shaped by his puckish humour.

D'Abreu's other great interest was the Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth, of which he was an Honorary Surgeon from 1950. He was a lifelong Roman Catholic and to this small hospital in St John's Wood, north London, run by the Sisters of Mercy, he gave generously of his time and expertise. At the time of his appointment it was a small independent charitable hospital with its own nurse-training school, a casualty department and a 24-hour emergency admission service—which put potentially huge demands on the consultant surgeons. The hospital took in patients of every religion and none—but it had in those days a special commitment to the clergy of the Archdiocese of Westminster. D'Abreu gave freely of his time and expertise in their care and treatment for many years.

The son of a Birmingham doctor, d'Abreu was born in 1904 and educated at Stonyhurst College, in Lancashire. When he left in 1922 he was Head of the Line (headboy), captain of both cricket and rugby and a natural for any sport he tackled. His interest in the field led to his becoming a member of the Board of Management of the Institute of Sports Medicine.

After graduation from Birmingham University he proceeded to Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1932. From 1934 to the outbreak of the Second World War he held registrar posts at St Bartholomew's and Westminster hospitals, in London. Already a member of the Royal Army Medical Corps (Supplementary Reserve), he was soon called up and served throughout, finishing as Lieutenant-Colonel in South-East Asia Command.

In 1945 he married Ann Bowes-Lyon (a cousin of the Queen Mother), and a year later was appointed a consultant surgeon to Westminster Hospital. To this hospital and its medical school he gave service for the next 23 years. He was also an examiner in surgery at the Universities of Cambridge and London and a member of the Court of Examiners of the Royal College of Surgeons. Later he was to become medical adviser and examiner to the Jockey Club.

He was always supportive of the students, especially in their

sporting activities. Rugby, and especially the Inter-Hospital Championship, was his obsession and one which undoubtedly helped the Westminster team to rise to great heights in the late Fifties. Never was a match played but he could be seen up and down the touchline encouraging, cajoling and even swearing at his team. At other times, when challenged, he



D'Abreu: surgical 'green fingers'

would perform the unusual feat of standing on his head whilst drinking a glass of beer—to the delight of his students.

Philip King

Francis Arthur d'Abreu, surgeon: born 1 October 1904; Consultant Surgeon, Westminster Hospital 1946-69 (Emeritus); Honorary Surgeon, Hospital of St John and St Elizabeth, St John's Wood 1950-69 (Emeritus); married 1945 Ann Bowes-Lyon (one son, two daughters); died 16 November 1995.



Macdonald: for 12 years organiser of the BBC's Northern Children's Hour

Photograph: BBC

Nan Macdonald

In an age when we read of the hundreds of thousands of pounds received by those regularly appearing on television and on radio, it is interesting to reflect that in the mid-1940s and at the height of his *Have A Go* fame, Wilfred Pickles drew the largest BBC audience recorded—yet would only accept a fee of precisely 18 guineas for each appearance he made on the BBC's Northern Children's Hour. Such was his tribute to the programme and in particular to Nan Macdonald, who was organiser of Northern Children's Hour from 1937 to 1949, for it was she who gave him his early range of broadcasting experience, along with Violet Carson, Derek Jacobi, Julie Andrews, Brian Trueman and Billie Whitelaw.

As for the young Brian Redhead, perhaps it was just as well that he decided to give up playing the clarinet after his broadcast initiation on Macdonald's *Young Artists* programmes from Newcastle, in favour of becoming a journalist.

Nan, or Margaret Annie Macdonald as she was christened, was born of Scottish parentage in London, attending the North London Collegiate School. From there she read Classics at Girton College, Cambridge, trained and led the chorus in Greek plays there, then proceeded to a teaching post in Classics at Howell's School, in Denbigh. In 1934, she obtained a post with the BBC in administration.

The chance to become involved with programme-making came in 1936 when she was one of the few selected to take part in the BBC's very first Programme Training Course. There followed a period of attachment to London Children's Hour and to Derek McCulloch (who later became "Uncle Mac" at the advent of *Children's Choice*, on the BBC Light programme), and she gained further experience of children's programmes working in Scotland. By the time Macdonald was appointed as *Children's Hour* Organiser

North Region in the September of 1937, the nationally broadcast *Children's Hour* programme already consisted of material drawn both from London and from all the BBC regions so the new voice of "Nan" was immediately heard throughout Britain, as she introduced her Network programmes from the largest of the BBC regions.

It was Nan Macdonald who, in 1938, started the five o'clock programme for the youngest age group, *Nursery Sing-Song*. At 5.15pm, listeners in London and some of all the other regions might then hear an episode of *The Prince and the Pauper*, the novel adapted for Macdonald by Joan Littlewood. At 5.45pm, Charles Holland, a plasterer, might be heard by Northern listeners as he told them of his experiences, or it could be William Bosworth, with more colourful tales of his circus life.

As Northern Children's Hour organiser, Nan Macdonald always put her own stamp on the programmes. They had to inform and to educate—and in an entertaining way. As Charles Groves said, arriving in 1944 as the new conductor of the BBC Northern Orchestra, "One of the first people to come and see me was Nan Macdonald. Each BBC region had its own *Children's Hour*—and the one in Manchester was Nan. She wanted exciting music from a wide repertoire. I responded with alacrity." So began the *Children's Hour* Concerts, broadcast to the nation from the Milton Hall, Manchester.

From the very day that regional broadcasting had resumed in July 1945, Northern Children's Hour was heralded by its own signature tune, "On Lley Moor", recorded by Charles Groves and the BBC Northern Orchestra. Now, in a different age and broadcasting to a far wider audience, Nan Macdonald's seven-day output included film reviews by John Stratton, a monthly *Children's Newsweek*, there was John Coatsman to talk about Common-

wealth affairs, Bob Reid with his "London letter", the headmaster Harry Rée on current affairs—and besides all this, exciting serials, plays, music, features, poetry programmes, variety programmes and not forgetting *Animals From Belle Vue Zoo*.

"What does it eat? ... how long does it live?" were the usual questions which the curator, Gerald Iles, received from his wide-eyed studio audience who were even allowed to hold the various exhibits. On one occasion Nan Macdonald took Gerald Iles on one of her regular broadcast excursions to children in hospitals, and the matron of Leasowes Hospital, Liverpool, rang the BBC line that night to ask if someone might come and take away the snake which a young patient had secreted beneath the bed sheets.

Macdonald's post-war feature programmes included *Walks With Wilfred Pickles* and *Wandering With No-mad*, while her invitations to a cross-section of her young audience to discuss her future plans in *Listeners' Forum* resulted in the long-running series scripted by Bertha Lonsdale, *Know Your Region*.

Nan Macdonald left Northern Children's Hour at the end of 1949. For a period after this she was attached to Children's Television at Lime Grove, in London. Her first contribution to *Children's Hour* as a freelance contributor was a feature in 1953 for the Coronation, "A Thousand Years of Pageantry". Then and until the demise of the programme in 1964, Macdonald's name was frequently to be seen in the *Radio Times* as the adapter of a whole range of classic drama. She retired in 1972 and reverted to the privacy of Margaret Annie Macdonald.

Trevor Potter

Margaret Annie "Nan" Macdonald, radio producer and presenter: born London 24 May 1908; organiser, Northern Children's Hour 1937-49; died 10 November 1995.

Dinesh Singh

Dinesh Singh served as Indian foreign minister in the Sixties and again in the Nineties. In between, he headed several other ministries before becoming minister without portfolio earlier this year.

Ideologically flexible and fiercely ambitious, the dapper Singh, forever with an eye to the political mala chance, switched parties in the Seventies when he was slighted by the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, for perpetrating rather foolhardy insinuations.

Gandhi laid great stress on foreign policy and as her external affairs minister, "kitchen cabinet" member and political troubleshooter, Singh worked closely with her through the Sixties. But, somewhat indecisively, Singh encouraged hints that his relationship with the widowed Mrs Gandhi was more than just political, a myth which briefly enhanced his status.

But when the rumours finally reached the prime minister's ears in 1971, Singh was dumped overnight and though he continued as an MP, Gandhi never accepted his peace offerings until her Congress (I) party was dislodged by the Janata Dal coalition in the 1977 general elections.

Feeling slighted, Singh joined the Janata Dal which lasted a little over two years. He then managed to ingratiate himself with Gandhi, rejoined the Congress (I) and once again became an MP. But despite hectic lobbying and embarrassing displays of abject loyalty, which Gandhi encouraged, he never won back her trust or a berth in her cabinet.

Nor did Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son and successor, forget Singh's indiscretion and political treachery. But Gandhi's changed his cabinet every few months, and Singh's seniority and experience led to his being made the commerce minister for a short while.

But the present prime minister, Narasimha Rao, a great believer in the occult, felt that Singh was lucky for him and made him foreign minister in January 1993. And, though he suffered a stroke soon after and could rarely attend office, Singh was retained in that post till early this year when he became minister without portfolio.

Dinesh Singh was born in 1925, the son of Raja Avadhesh Singh, the talukdar, or landed nobleman, of Kalakankar in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Though most rajas or rulers, and talukdars of Uttar Pradesh supported the British, Singh's family were staunchly nationalist and committed to Mahatma Gandhi's freedom struggle.

His grandfather was one of the founder members of the Congress Party which led India's independence struggle and the Mahatma was a frequent house guest at the family house on the banks of the sacred Ganges river. Brijesh Singh, one of Singh's

uncles, was a fiery Communist who married the Russian dictator Josef Stalin's daughter Svetlana.

After graduating from Lucknow University in the north, Dinesh Singh was sent by the prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, a close family friend, as private secretary to the Indian ambassador in London and later Paris. In 1944 he married Neelima Kumari, princess of Tehri Garhwal, a small principality in the Himalayas.

On returning home from Paris in 1951, Singh temporarily became private secretary to Nehru and tried joining the diplomatic corps but was offered a position only in category "B" of the Indian Foreign Service. He declined, opted for politics and was elected to parliament for the first time in 1957 from Banda in Uttar Pradesh.

Singh was appointed deputy foreign minister by Nehru in 1962 and four years later Indira Gandhi promoted him to junior external affairs minister. A year later he attained cabinet status as commerce minister be-



Singh dismissed by Mrs Gandhi

fore becoming foreign minister in 1969.

After falling from power, Singh discredited himself by refusing, despite widespread media criticism, to move out of the palatial bungalow in Lutyens' New Delhi which had been allotted to him after he became a minister in the Sixties. He successfully lobbied succeeding housing ministers to permit him to stay.

A nasty dresser, Singh was a distant and somewhat reserved person who wrote two books, *Towards New Horizons* (1971), the year he was dismissed by Mrs Gandhi and *India and the Changing Asian Scene* (1973).

Kalyati Singh

Dinesh Singh, politician: born Kalakankar, Uttar Pradesh 10 July 1925; member, Lower House of Parliament 1957-77; member, Upper House of Parliament 1977-95; Deputy Minister for External Affairs 1962-66; Minister of State 1966-67; Minister 1969-71, 1993-95; Minister of Commerce 1967-69; Minister of Industrial Development and Internal Trade 1970-71; Minister without portfolio 1995; married 1944 Neelima Kumari (six daughters); died New Delhi 30 November 1995.

Winifred Ferrier

Elizabeth Forbes (obituaries, 10 November) rightly stresses the great support that Winifred Ferrier gave to her famous sister Kathleen, writes Helen Anderson. But she was distinguished in her own right.

When she relinquished the responsibilities of full-time head teacher to give more time to Kathleen and her father she was taken on as a dress designer for

Marks & Spencer. She also had a book on teaching arithmetic in the primary school published by Arnold.

Mention should be made too of the large part played by Winifred in the successful launching in 1993 of the Kathleen Ferrier Society, of which she was President, and to which she gave all Kathleen's memorabilia.

A foretaste of heaven found in Armley

faith & reason

This week the General Synod debated the report *Faith in the City*, published 10 years ago. Wherever religion is practised, Peter Mullen argues, its essence is not social work and prayers.

Stay in the city by all means, but remember the social gospel is not enough. We know the text: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." And of course works of charity are necessary to raise the practice of religious faith above the level of sentimentality and pietistic stunts, but the essence of religion is not social work with prayers. It must offer transforming spiritual experience or it is nothing, a foundation built on sand.

I should give an example of what I am getting at.

When I was a boy of 17 and growing up in downtown Leeds between Armley jail and the gasworks, I went one morning to the parish church of St Bartholomew. As I stepped inside, the service had already begun. Here comes the golden cross, the Crozier in his alb and white. Servers, acolytes, the vicar and two curates in their festival vestments.

They were singing "Blessed City, Heavenly Salem" to the awesome tune "Westminster". I felt I had died, for heaven must be like this. The mighty Schulze organ, crowned with the carved angel of the apocryphal, growled and roared. Then it calmed down and sounded like a single clarinet in paradise over the words:

From the celestial realms descending
Bridal glory round thee shined,
Met for him whose love espoused thee,
to thy Lord thou shalt be led.

It could not be true, could it? There was a roar of bass notes and a terrifying improvisation by the organist in the last verse.

Land and honour to the Father
Land and honour to the Son
Land and honour to the Holy Spirit
Fathers and sons coupled together. It could

not be true, could it? The prayers began: "O God forasmuch as without thee, we are not able to please thee...". Never mind the school lessons: this is what the English language is for.

A short sermon and soon it was the Communion. Going forth to the high altar for the first time made sense of the Psalms, made me feel as if I was inhabiting the Psalmist's world: "I will ascend unto mine altar, O Lord; and dwell on thy holy hill...".

The aromatic blend of ritual and red wine, eight candles flickering. The Scholze, again, but restrained: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence...". Another prayer in the hymn: "Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore him." And in the silence a holy thump as the congregation knelt. The silence shattered by the summons to action that begins Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*. And we all went home.

Coleridge said, "I am weary of evidences, but make men feel religion." That is how it was in Armley those years

ago. And not just in Armley, but all over the scruffy side of Leeds and in all the great Victorian industrial cities. Religion as a living foretaste of heaven.

The churches which provided this weekly glimpse of the beatific vision were all on the wrong side of town. In Leeds St Bartholomew's, Armley; St Stephen's, in Holbeck; St Mary's, Hunslet—poor parishes all of them: shun parishes, even. There was no patronising Noddy language but the full juice of the fruit: the King James Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. I never heard anyone complain that this was the terminology of clergies. We were all clergies for we knew we had not just the best but something incomparable. Did we understand it? In religion it is never a case of theoretical understanding but of gradually, by habit and use, entering a world. At any rate we knew there is no such thing as profound truth in trashy language.

We were much poorer than most of today's inhabitants of the inner city but we did not think of ourselves as candidates for charity. On the contrary, it was the poor who gave for all they were worth to the church—for the excellent reason that the church and what went on there was the centre and source of all true value.

We had pride. We had a centre that was not just a social centre. No one ever asked what it was all for. Unlike today's Church, utilitarianism didn't enter into it. It was not ritual as a sign of something political, a means; but an end in itself. We were every Sunday morning led into the Real Presence. There wasn't much social work, but there was transcendence. We looked up through all that music, light and poetry; and what we looked up to drew us to Himself.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

DREW-SMYTHE: To Lisa (née Brady) and David, a daughter, Jessi Jean, born December 1995, Sydney, Australia.

SPACKMAN: On 24 November 1995, to Anne (née Covington) and David, a daughter, Amy Elizabeth, a sister for Thomas and William.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3GL. Telephone 0171-293 2811 or faxed to 0171-293 2810, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (weddings, funerals, forthcoming marriages, marriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Prince Edward tomorrow attends a Christmas carol concert given by the Epworth Choir in support of the Children's Hospice Appeal in the New Theatre, York. Following, Surrey, Princess Alexandra, President, tomorrow attends a carol concert in aid of the Children's Country Holidays Fund at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, London SE10.

Changing of the Guard

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment moves the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion, the Queen's Life Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards. TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment moves the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Birthdays

TODAY: Sir Maurice Bathurst QC, international judge, 82; Sir Frederic Bennet, former MP, 77; Mr Timothy Bowtell MP, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, 53; The Hon Nigel Calder, science writer, 64; Professor Sir Alan Cook, former Master, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 73; Sir Frank Cooper, chairman, High Integrity Systems Ltd, 73; Sir David Davies, former chairman, Welsh Development Agency, 86; Mr Miles England, football manager, 53; Mr Ian Finlay, former Director, Royal Scottish Museum, 89; Mr David Green, director of Voluntary Service Overseas, 47; Mr Michael Green, chairman, Carlton Communications, 48; General Alexander Haig, former US Secretary of State, 71; Marshall of the RAF Sir Peter Harding, former Chief of the Defence Staff, 62; Miss Julie Harris, actress, 70; Miss Patricia Hewitt, Head of Research, Andersen Consulting, 47; Sir George Labouchere, former ambassador to Spain, 90; Dr Brian Lang, chief executive and deputy chairman, British Library, 50; Mr Roy Miles, vice-chairman, Allied Domecq, 66; Dame Winifred Preece, former president, Royal College of Nursing, 83; Miss Monica Sales, tennis player, 22; Mr Alex Smith, MEP, 52.

TOMORROW: Mr Trevor Bailey, former England cricketer, 72; Mr Ralph Bennett, former chairman, London Transport, 72; Professor Ian Butterworth, former Principal, Queen Mary and Westfield College, London, 65; Mr Charles Craig, former Irish rugby international, 53; Mr Jean-Luc Godard, film director, 65; Sir William Harpham, former ambassador, 89; Mr Maxwell Hutchinson, architect and founder member, the Hutchinson Studio, 47; Sir Brian Jenkins, former Lord Mayor of London, 60; Professor Geoffrey

Kirk, Emeritus Professor of Greek, Cambridge University, 74; Mr Franz Klammer, skier, 42; Mr Ralph McCall, guitarist, 51; Miss Tanya Moiseiwitch, theatrical designer, 81; The Rev Professor Charles Moule, theologian, 87; Mr Paul Victor Pasmore, artist, 87; Mr Robert Phillips, deputy Director-General, BBC, and chairman, BBC Worldwide, 50; Mr Mel Smith, actor and comedian, 43; Professor Peter Joyce, Vice-Chancellor, Liverpool John Moores University, 56; Mr Andy Williams, singer, 65.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Sir Francis Carruthers Gould, caricaturist and politician, 1844; Georges-Pierre Seurat, painter, 1859; Maria Anna Cecilia Sofia Callas (Kalogeropoulos), operatic soprano, 1923; Deshaire Margaret of Angoulême, Queen of Henry II of Navarre, 1549; Donatien-Alphonse François, Marquis de Sade, writer and philosopher, 1814; John Brown, abolitionist, executed 1859; Philip Arthur Larkin, poet, 1955. On this day the new St Paul's Cathedral was opened, 1697; Napoleon was crowned Emperor in Paris by Pope Pius VII, 1804; Birkbeck College, London, was founded, 1829; King Camp Gillette patented the first safety razor, 1901; the first atomic pile started operating in Chicago, 1942. Today is the Feast Day of St Bibiana or Viviana, St Chromastus of Aquiles, St Nonnus and St Silvanus of Constantinople.

TOMORROW: Births: Nicola Amati, violin-maker, 1596; Samuel Crompton, inventor of the spinning mule, 1753; Sir Rowland Hill, originator of the penny post, 1795; Joseph Conrad (Józef Teodor Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski), novelist, 1857. Deaths: St Francis Xavier, missionary, 1552; Alessandro Far-

nese, third Duke of Parma, military commander, 1592; Robert Louis Balfour Stevenson, novelist, 1894; Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, 1910; Pierre-Auguste Renoir, painter, 1919; Sir Oswald Ewald Hodge, Fleet leader, 1980. On this day: the newly built Alhambra Theatre opened in London, 1883; the Home Guard "stood down" with a parade of 7,000 in Hyde Park, London, 1944; Dr Christian Barnard performed the first heart transplant, South Africa, 1967; Thursday is the First Sunday in Advent and Feast Day of St Cassian of Trier, Saints Claudius, Hilaria and their Companions, St Francis Xavier and St Lucius of Britain.

Lectures

TODAY: National Gallery: James Heard, "Gold (II): Crivelli, The Virgin and Child and Saints (The Descent of Aluprice)", 12pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Louise Hoffman, "Christianity: church plate", 2.30pm. British Museum: Della Pemberton, "Ancient Egyptian Textiles", 1.15pm. TOMORROW: Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "Panoramic Paintings", 2.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: Wendy Nelson-Cave, "Richard and Maria Cosway: Regency artists of taste and fashion", 3pm.

Dinners

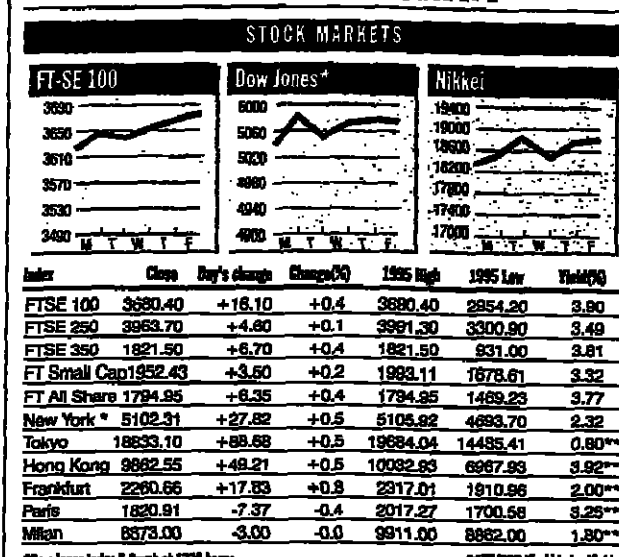
Honourable Artillery Company: Col Sir Colin Cole, President. Honourable Artillery Company Mess Club, was in the chair at a dinner held yesterday evening at Armoury House, London EC1. Capt J.H. James, Lt Gen Sir William Ross and Professor Sir Michael Howard were the speakers.

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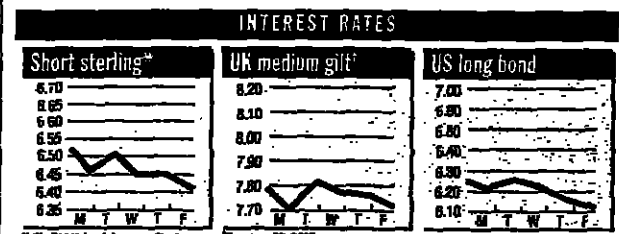
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MARKET SUMMARY



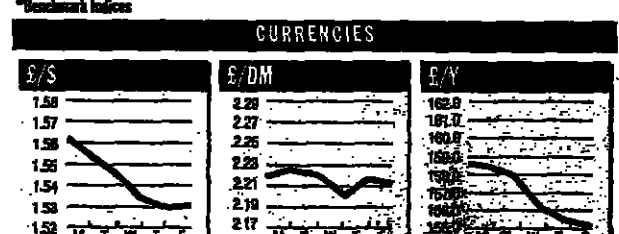
MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Price	Change	% Change
Coltch Group	802	5.7
British Telecom	1675	1.2
Guardian Royal	292	8.1
Pearson	682	3.5
Perpetual	1725	3.2



Money Market Rates

Rate	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year
UK	6.69	6.32	7.52	7.49
US	5.81	5.44	5.81	7.81
Japan	0.34	0.38	0.34	4.63
Germany	4.06	3.75	4.06	7.28



Commodity Prices

Commodity	Price	Change	% Change
Oil (Brent)	1.5308	0.130	1.5958
Gold	386.55	-1.15	379.2
Wheat	251.98	-1.5	242.980

IN BRIEF

Deregulation body for power industry

The electricity industry has been told to establish a new executive body to implement deregulation in 1998 and to set out a detailed plan by the end of January. The recommendations were in a report from PA Consulting commissioned by the electricity regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild. He said the main responsibility for the changes, which will introduce competition into domestic electricity supply, rested with the electricity companies and generators. There has been mounting criticism of the industry's lack of preparation.

Completion expected for Bancorp sale

NatWest Group is expected to complete the sale next week of its New Jersey-based US retail banking arm, Bancorp, for a sum believed to be over £2bn. Speculation as to the buyer has centered on Fleet Financial, the acquisitive New England bank, as well as the Bank of New York, First Fidelity and Nationsbank. HSBC, the London-based international bank which owns Midland, took an early interest but is believed to have pulled out of the running. NatWest Group has decided to abandon its position as a small retail player in the US, switching the resources into building up its investment banking activities in New York.

British Gas reduces rises for shippers

British Gas has cut back and delayed planned increases in the charges for gas shippers who use its pipelines, to nearly half the level announced in September. Overall charges will increase by 1.9 per cent compared with almost 4 per cent, which was first proposed. The move follows pressure from shippers, which account for 40 per cent of the market.

Bank of Western Australia float

Bank of Western Australia (BankWest), which was bought by the Bank of Scotland for \$900m in September, said offers for the float of 49 per cent of the Perth-based bank are expected to open on 8 January. Standard & Poor's, the rating agency, lowered its long and short-term ratings of the Bank of Scotland debt by one notch due to the impact of the purchase on the bank's capital. Despite this, Bank of Scotland's shares rose 13p to 265p.

Restructuring at BA

The board of British Airways yesterday agreed a restructuring of middle and senior management. A number of staff are likely to go or be redeployed because the new chief executive, Robert Ayling, wants to streamline the reporting structure.

Welsh Water in Swalec discussions

Welsh Water was in intensive discussions yesterday with its advisers over whether to launch a hostile £850m bid for Swalec, the South Wales electricity company, which the City believes could be an easy target. On Thursday, Swalec rejected an informal 91p-a-share offer to secure board agreement, and Welsh Water said a hostile bid was one of its options.

Kvaerner lifts Amec stake

Kvaerner has lifted its stake in the UK contractor Amec by another 1.1 per cent, taking its holding to 18.1 per cent. The Norwegian company is on Monday expected to release the terms of offer for the preference shares, which analysts now believe will involve some sort of loan note.

Coal Investments calls for 'rescue funds'

DAVID HELLIER

The future of Malcolm Edwards, the former British Coal commercial director, was in doubt yesterday as his coal-mining group said it planned to raise further capital in what is being seen as a "rescue rights" issue. If the issue of new equity goes ahead - and market sources suggest that it will need to be priced at a heavy discount - it will be the fourth time the company has been to the market for new funds in the two

years since taking over parts of British Coal. Sources close to the company said its bankers and shareholders wanted Mr Edwards, who is currently executive chairman, to remain with the group. "He is very valuable to the business," one source said. But they added that they would try to strengthen senior management to bring in somebody to perform the chief executive's role. Others in the City were less sure about Mr Edwards' ability

to stay on. "He may be a good salesman but the City is definitely questioning Mr Edwards' ability to run a public company after this," one City coal analyst said yesterday. In October Mr Edwards told an annual meeting of the company's shareholders that the group would be profitable by "well before the end of the financial year". The group, which bought a number of pits from British Coal including Hem Heath, Silverdale and Markham, has

been beset by production problems that have ratcheted up costs whilst adversely affecting revenues. Yesterday's announcement came after a sharp fall in the share price of Coal Investments. The price of the shares fell 26p to 30p at their low point as investors worried about the company's ability to continue paying its suppliers. The shares closed at 35p, down 21p. The company said it "has agreed terms with its bankers for the removal by them of cer-

tain conditions attaching to the extension of existing credit facilities in order to enable the company to meet its currently anticipated cash requirements." "However," it added, "an injection of further capital will be required in order to achieve the company's planned level of production." The company is expected to raise between £10m and £20m but some coal industry experts doubted whether this would be anything like enough to adequately finance the full-scale de-

velopment of the collieries. "The company, together with its financial advisers and with the support of the banks, is working on proposals for an issue of further equity, the details of which are expected to be announced during the first quarter of next year," the company said. Mr Edwards fought and lost a hard and bitter campaign last year against Richard Budge of RJB Mining to buy the bulk of the English assets of British Coal.

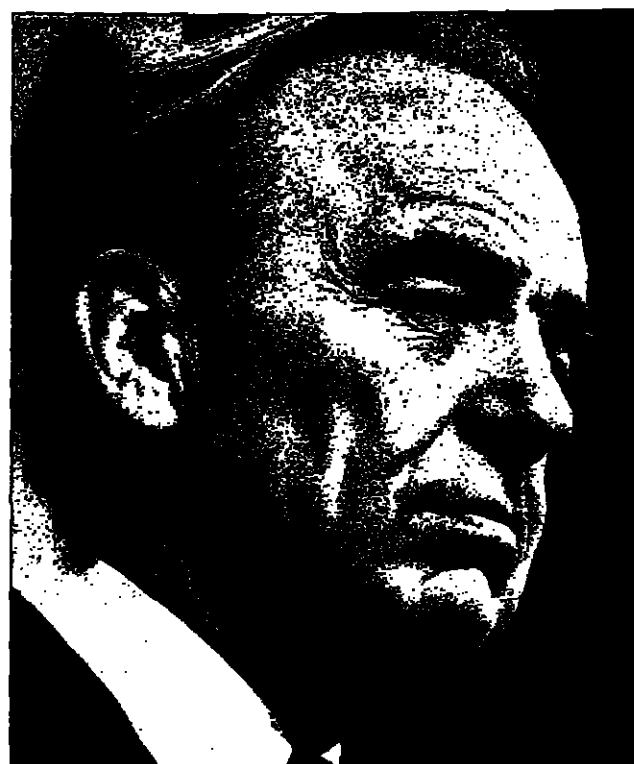
Sky wars: Broadcaster's shares slump as pressure from small cable companies produces inquiry

Regulator investigates BSkyB grip on pay-TV

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

BSkyB's tight grip on the pay-TV market was yesterday thrown into doubt as the Office of Fair Trading announced a wide-ranging inquiry into the broadcaster's near-monopoly in the UK. Shares in the BSkyB, 40 per cent owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, plunged 8 per cent in mid-day trading, before recovering to close at 428.5p, down 5.5p. At risk are the company's supply arrangements with cable operators, as well as its exclusive sport deals, particularly for football. Jonathan Hellier, analyst at James Capel, said: "The share price is bound to be volatile on the way down, just as it has been on the way up."

These agreements are believed by the cable operators to have been wholly inadequate. They believe that BSkyB has a near-monopoly in both film and sport programming in the UK and controls access to pay-TV systems through its domination of conditional-access technology. They have also criticised the way BSkyB bundles its channels for wholesale distribution to cable operators. BSkyB said yesterday it pledged full co-operation to the director-general of the OFT, John Bridgeman. But Sam Chisholm, chief executive of BSkyB, lashed out at the complaining cable companies, accusing them of "using the



Vision, guts and a near-monopoly: Rupert Murdoch (left) and Sam Chisholm of BSkyB



regulatory process to further their businesses rather than building their networks and serving their customers." BSkyB has said in the past that the cable operators should compete openly for program-

ming and develop their own conditional-access technology. "Anybody could do what we did," Mr Chisholm told the Independent earlier this year. "But only Murdoch had the vision and the guts."

Steven Wagner, chief executive of International CableTel, which has led the battle against BSkyB, said: "I am delighted. It is fortunate there is a new director-general, because in the past the OFT has either failed

to act or has made matters worse. I hope after this exercise there will be a more balanced marketplace."

Alan Bates, chief executive of Bell Cablemedia, said: "I am very pleased that after such a long time of living with a very one-sided, dominant monopoly, the cable industry and the consumer can look forward to a fairer market." But not all cable operators welcomed the news. The two biggest operators, Telewest and Nynex CableComms, have signed long-term supply agreements with BSkyB, and confirmed in the past that they were satisfied with the terms of programme supply from BSkyB. "We are very disappointed by this," a spokesman for Nynex CableComms said. The split in the cable industry has worsened in recent months, following the signing of the long-term deals in May and the collapse of two pay-per-view, cable-exclusive programming ventures.

OFT hampered by slow system

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

The OFT's investigation into BSkyB's sports contracts comes under an old and cumbersome piece of legislation which the Government has promised to tighten. The Department of Trade and Industry has indicated that it will give the OFT powers to prohibit restrictive practices as soon as they come to light and to levy fines immediately. This would be part of a package of measures, including new powers for the OFT to seize

documents and raid premises, which the Government announced that it favoured as long ago as 1993.

However, promised legislation to implement the powers has failed to materialise in successive Queen's Speeches. Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, is to publish a new consultation document on the issue early next year and is studying whether to introduce some of the changes without full-scale legislation.

The promised prohibition approach to restrictive practices would short-circuit the present

procedure, under which agreements between firms must be registered.

They are then sent to the Restrictive Practices Court to decide whether they should be banned.

This is time-consuming, and a company is only penalised if it subsequently ignores a ban decided upon by the court.

The prohibition system, which is used by the European Commission's competition authority, has the advantage of allowing immediate bans on undesirable practices. It is then up to the defendant to challenge

the competition authority ruling in court.

The other investigation into BSkyB's position in the pay-TV market is under monopolies legislation, an area where the Government said in 1993 it does not intend to introduce a prohibition approach.

John Bridgeman, the director-general of Fair Trading, has also suggested that the OFT should be given the power to make direct references of mergers to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, a power Mr Bridgeman now has only for monopoly inquiries.

GEC's Yarrow wins £600m Brunei job

RUSSELL HOTTEN

GEC's Yarrow Shipbuilders, on Clydeside, has won a contract to build three patrol vessels for Brunei, thought to be worth about £600m. The company, struggling under a lack of orders, said the work would help to secure jobs, but was unlikely to stop the 400 redundancies announced in September. "It is a major contract," a spokesman said. GEC is also awaiting news on a UK order for up to three Type 23 frigates, which may be announced next week. Both GEC and its competitor for the contract, the Solent-based Vosper

Thornycroft, have warned about the implication for jobs if they lose the tender. The Brunei order is for the design, construction, and integration of the weapons system, but several months' work has to be carried out on the specifications before building work starts. Delivery of the first vessel is scheduled for the year 2000. With so few defence contracts around, analysts say that unless GEC wins the forthcoming tender from the Ministry of Defence for frigates it will have to shed more jobs from its 2,500-strong workforce. Vosper Thornycroft said more than 500 jobs will be lost

if it loses the order to Yarrow. James Arbuthnot, Defence Procurement Minister, said: "I am delighted that the UK has won this important order, against strong world-wide competition." Meanwhile, Mr Arbuthnot yesterday appeared to underline attempts by the Government to forge a new industrial defence strategy that would not just involve European collaboration. "We are looking, from as early as possible in the life of projects, at every possibility for collaborative procurement not just with Europe but also with the USA," he said. There had been some con-

cern within parts of the Government that defence procurement was being done solely by links with Europe.

While projects such as Eurofighter and the concept of a European Armament Agency were important, Mr Arbuthnot said the Government could not ignore other parts of the world. "The UK defence industry has a strong foothold in the USA, and there are good opportunities to build on this."

He said the MoD was trying to improve its relationship with the Department of Trade and Industry. Both departments would work more closely in the evaluation of bids.

Tunnel debt sold on at 37%

DAVID HELLIER

One of the bank lenders to Eurotunnel, the struggling operator of the Channel Tunnel, has sold its £5m debt in the company on the secondary market for 37 per cent of its value.

According to secondary debt market dealers this is the lowest price the debt has reached in the market.

Gary Klesch, whose company is a key trader in the secondary bank debt market, said: "I see the price going lower still because there is a potential overhang of debt, especially bearing in mind the fact that one-third of it is owned by the Japanese banks, many of whom are keen to sell."

According to Mr Klesch, the Japanese banks are under government pressure to make provision for as much doubtful overseas debt as possible.

When Eurotunnel declared a standstill on interest payment on junior debt in September, the company's price on the debt market fell from an offer price of around 70 per cent to 58 per cent.

Eurotunnel's main agent banks - Midland, National Westminster, Banque Nationale de Paris and Credit Lyonnais - are trying to put a refinancing package together. But bankers do not expect this to be finalised until the spring of next year at the earliest.

"There's a lot of work to be done, in many different areas of the world, and it's not going to be resolved overnight," one banker said.

Shares in Eurotunnel closed the day down 3p at 92p.

Tesco hits out at 'misleading' ad

NIGEL COPE

Tesco, the supermarket group, has made a formal complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority about an animal rights advertisement which is attempting to stop the culling of seals in Canada. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) ran a full-page advertisement in one of yesterday's newspapers calling for Tesco chairman Sir Ian MacLaurin to ban Canadian farmed salmon from its stores in order to increase pressure on the Canadian authorities to stop the culling.

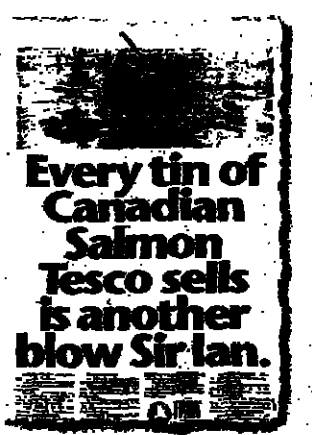
Under a graphic illustration, the advertisement headline reads: "Every tin of Canadian salmon Tesco sells is another blow Sir Ian."

Tesco said it had made the complaint because it felt that the advertisement could be misleading. The company said yesterday: "Tesco does not condone the practice of seal culling but we believe this advert is mis-

leading. We do not feel it is our role to make moral judgements on our customers' behalf. It is up to [them] to make an informed choice. We label our products clearly and display literature in the stores to enable them to do this."

IFAW said yesterday that it stood by its advertisement and planned to run it in other newspapers. It pointed out that it did not intend to harm Tesco, and had held discussions with the company before the advert appeared. The group had chosen Tesco for its promotion because Sir Ian had made a stand against selling Canadian fish in 1984. But the supermarket chain said that that situation had been different as it had involved baby seals.

The animal rights group also said that, in refusing to help to stop the killing, Tesco was inadvertently supporting the trade in seals' products, which are regarded as an aphrodisiac in the Far East. Tesco said: "That is completely wrong. This has



Graphic: The ad campaign branded 'cynical' by Canada

nothing to do with us. We think [this] trade is appalling. But it has nothing to do with Tesco's salmon."

The Canadians say the culling is necessary. At a press conference yesterday the Canadian High Commission said: "This cynical campaign, whose main

purpose is to raise funds for the IFAW, is a further example of... alarmist propaganda. If this technique is allowed to prevail it will not end with one supermarket chain or one product."

The commission said that the culling had to be done to curb the burgeoning population of harp seals in the North Atlantic. It added that the number of seals had doubled to 5 million in the past five years, and that each seal can consume up to 1.4m tonnes of fish per year. The commission also said that only 3 per cent of seals are still clobbered. The rest are shot.

In a separate development, Tesco yesterday mailed out £40m of money-off and product offers to holders of its loyalty card. Members who have collected over 40 points, between 16 October and 12 November, will also be sent a turkey voucher worth £3.55. Tesco's Clubcard has over 6 million members, and more than 170,000 students have signed up for the company's student card.

صكا من الامل



COMMENT

'The City is not easily side-tracked from the sniff of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice ... Everyone likes a stock market wonder company and, in British Biotech, we seem to have one.'

An excited City hails Biotech as 'next Glaxo'

Is British Biotech the next Glaxo or just another speculative bubble? The City is excitedly talking about it in the reverent tones of the former. The success of clinical trials on its BB-2516 cancer drug sent the shares soaring to £21 yesterday before falling back again. The finance director, Jim Noble, tried vainly to dampen the hysteria by warning that the drug had many obstacles to overcome before it becomes commercially available, possibly in three years, but he failed. Everyone likes a stock market wonder company and in British Biotech we seem to have one.

Mr Noble's caution is understandable as well as responsible. It prevents millions of cancer sufferers being offered false hope. It also allows the company to continue its development without being added to the wonder-drug tag. But the City is not easily side-tracked from the sniff of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice and the talk is of huge potential for the drug and huge share price potential for the company.

While extremely encouraging, the cancer data is very preliminary. However, British Biotech is more than a one-drug company. What really impresses analysts is the range of drugs the company has under development, all with enormous potential. This weekend British Biotech will release progress reports on another drug, BB-10010, which protects the immune system of patients undergoing chemotherapy. Its arthritis drug, BB-2963, goes into clinical tri-

als next year, with Glaxo Wellcome itself picking up the bill. Glaxo Wellcome is also paying for phase-two clinical trials for British Biotech's asthma drug. While health regulators need to be 100 per cent sure of a drug to give it approval, the stock market is not so demanding. If there is an even chance of British Biotech getting at least some of its products to market it will be enough to drive the share price, say analysts.

One of the days when the big pharmaceutical companies threw expensive combinations of drugs at mice and men, British Biotech, with its intellectual base in Oxford University, sells itself as a company trying to provide solutions to the root causes of complaints which either affect millions or are very expensive to treat. Cancer has always been the great Holy Grail of modern medicine and the potential market is enormous if the drugs are good enough. With royalty agreements already in place, Glaxo Wellcome is already lowering on the sidelines. For the time being UK institutions are so convinced of the potential that anything less than a silly price would fail to tempt them. The upside for this stock still looks huge.

A first step to reining in Murdoch

Could it be that the year-long campaign by cable operators to rein in Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB has finally borne fruit?

On the face of it, yesterday's announcement that the Office of Fair Trading is to investigate the terms of Sky's supply of programming to cable operators is a sign that the Government (the DTI and OFT at any rate) is finally taking Mr Murdoch's dominant position seriously.

There is much at risk for BSkyB, which has acquired a powerful position in the UK television market by offering film and sport unavailable elsewhere. Cable operators, following efforts to develop their own sources of Hollywood product and top-level sport, gave in, and accepted that they would have to buy wholesale from Sky.

The problem from the cable operators' point of view was that BSkyB could set the price and the terms of supply. It could bundle channels together, obliging them to take both movie channels, for example, if they wanted to offer their subscribers Disney. A wanted of "informal undertakings" between the OFT and BSkyB failed to offer much remedy. Even after Sky's channels were ostensibly meant to be offered *à la carte*, cable operators found that they still had to take at least one movie channel if they wanted to get Disney. Typically for a company run along Mr Murdoch's preferred lines, every concession by BSkyB seemed to hide yet another condition. For every one issue on which the company apparently gave way, another two would emerge - vintage Murdoch.

This has become more than just a com-

mercial battle. Reining in Mr Murdoch has become an issue of public policy in the light of the advent of digital technology. BSkyB cannot be allowed to leverage its analogue dominance to take over the digital world as well. The OFT inquiry is a first step: wholesale programming must be available on transparent, unbundled terms. Next, the anti-competitive clauses some of Sky's contracts (with Nynex, Telewest and the Premier League, for a start) must be quashed. Down the road, Sky's dominance of conditional access must be whittled down.

Finally, with the likely full-scale commercialisation of the BBC, the consolidation of the ITV sector and the advent of digital, it may even be time to bring BSkyB under more direct regulatory control. Why should Sky, unlike all the monopoly ITV companies, be able to avoid full and frank regulation? Clearly these are not matters for the OFT but at least Mr Bridgeman has realised that someone has to make a start.

Granada close to its goal

Less than two weeks into the Forté takeover battle and the Granada share price is already beginning to creep back from the drubbing it received in the immediate aftermath of the company's £3.2bn bid. Gerry Robinson, chief executive, still has a task to perform in convincing the City of the

merits of this takeover, but he is beginning to get there. In the meantime Forté looks as vulnerable as ever. There is enormous disillusion among institutional shareholders with this company. If Mr Robinson's task is still a hard one, Forté's is doubly so.

Forté's first formal defence document is out next week but unless there is something unexpected to pull out of the hat it is hard to see how it can further the argument very much. The track record is poor. While it might be possible to put some fancy sum-of-the-parts valuation on the company, such exercises are only meaningful if management is prepared to put the valuation with a wholesale breakup. Does Sir Rocco Forté really want to do that? He seems prepared to go further than Granada on this front but not the whole hog.

The other traditional strategy in a bid defence is to attack the bidder. Here again Forté is going to find it hard going. Unless there is an Achilles' heel we do not know about, Forté is not going to be able to fault Granada on financial performance. In accounting terms, too, the company looks squeaky-clean.

The commercial logic of the deal is easier ground but again the core Forté businesses of roadside catering and inexpensive overnight accommodation fit neatly into the Granada group. Sir Rocco may yet surprise us but at this stage it looks bad for him. A little bit more on the offer price and Granada is home and dry.

Mixed economy: Hopeful signals for mortgage lenders, but an improvement in Britain's trade balance is expected to prove short-lived

Housing market shows first signs of revival

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

Mortgage lenders yesterday reported what they saw as the first positive signs in the housing market for many months. House prices jumped 1.5 per cent in November, their biggest monthly rise for more than a year, according to Nationwide Building Society. Halifax's price index, due out on Monday, is expected to continue its recent pattern of modest monthly increases.

The news on prices was supported by separate Bank of England figures showing a significant rise in the number of new mortgages approved in October.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, said: "The housing

market is not yet out of the woods of recession, but there are some positive signs." The cuts in mortgage rates announced earlier this week would help confidence, he said.

Philip Williamson, a Nationwide spokesman, said the ab-

sence of any Budget measures for housing was disappointing, but there was evidence of a firmer trend since the summer. Halifax believes the market has stabilised and should recover next year.

Without any special Budget measures for housing, the fortunes of mortgage lenders rest on a recovery. But hopes rose yesterday that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, might be able to deliver another fall in the cost of home loans by reducing base rates at the next opportunity. The FT-SE 100 index closed at a new high, up just over 16 points at 3,680.4.

Evidence that manufacturing industry is in decline for the first time in three years boosted hopes of a base rate reduction. Separate figures showing a record rise in consumer credit

in October did nothing to dampen them.

The November survey of purchasing managers in manufacturing showed a drop in the activity index below 50, the threshold between expansion and contraction.

Output, one of five components of the index, edged up last month. But new orders fell sharply. The price index fell to its lowest level since August 1992, suggesting that cost pressures are no longer an issue in manufacturing.

Stocks of raw materials fell in response to weaker demand. However, stocks of finished goods rose slightly as production exceeded sales. Helen MacFarlane, an economist at the City brokers Hoare Govett, said: "It is clear that stocks have increased to uncomfortable lev-

els." Most City economists expect official figures for manufacturing output in October, out on Wednesday, to remain weak after a drop in September.

News of a record increase of £872m in consumer credit in October did not affect the City

view that a cut in base rates could come as soon as 13 December, after the next monetary meeting. The increase took the annual growth in consumer credit to 13.7 per cent - puzzlingly high given the weakness of recent retail sales figures.



Moving index: Trade deficit on cars worsened to £1.2bn

Exports reach a record high

PAUL WALLACE
Economics Editor

Britain's trade deficit fell by £300m to £1bn in September as the volume and value of exports reached a record high. But City analysts warned that the improvement in the trade balance would prove short-lived.

Although Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, welcomed the performance of exporters, official statisticians said the latest estimates of trends in both volume and value pointed to a continuing deterioration in the trade balance. "The October global data will probably show the improvement in the deficit more than reversed," warned Adam Cole, economist at James Capel.

The latest figures, incorporating new information about the balance of trade with the rest of the European Union, showed that rising imports from

the rest of the world were responsible for the trend deterioration in the deficit.

Comparing the three months ending in September with the previous three, the underlying volume of exports - excluding oil and erratics - rose by just over 3 per cent to both the EU and the rest of the world. However, imports rose by 5 per cent from outside the EU but only 2.7 per cent from within the EU.

The trade deficit of £300m with the EU in September was unchanged on August. However, it fell by £500m in the third quarter compared with the second. It would have improved even more without a surge in imports of cars. This caused the deficit on cars to worsen by more than £300m to £1.2bn in the third quarter. The price of exports to the EU rose much more sharply than those to the rest of the world.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Work to do at Wolverhampton

These were record profits from Wolverhampton & Dudley, but strip out property profits and the rate of increase, 7 per cent to £40.2m, is unlikely to set pulses racing. True, margins recovered nicely in the second half so that for the full year they matched last year's 18.4 per cent, but the underlying problems facing the West Midlands brewer remain.

With market shares of only 6 per cent in the Banks's region and 4 per cent in the North-east, where the recent acquisition, Camerons, is located, there is plainly plenty to go for in terms of organic growth within Wolves's existing areas. But the flip side of that niche position is that the company finds itself uncomfortably squeezed between its bigger rivals such as Bass and Courage still slugging it out for market dominance.

That is a problem in Wolves's core region because profit margins in the West Midlands are the lowest in the country, with beer selling for less than 120p a pint, much cheaper than anywhere else. In an increasingly competitive environment, changing perceptions of how much a pint should sell for and persuading rivals to follow you up is a non-starter. That means volumes are the key and here the company has done better than average in tenanted pubs but it is little consolation when that outperformance means a fall of 3.2 per cent compared with 4.2 per cent for the market.

Only in the more food-oriented destination pubs and restaurants and taverns have like-for-like wet sales improved much, underlining the importance of food in driving beer sales, and Wolves does not yet have enough pubs providing meals.

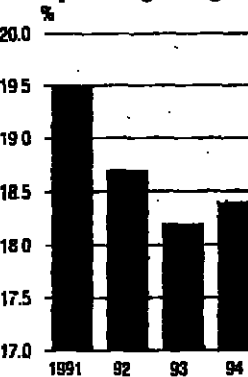
Another persistent problem is that Camerons, the North-east brewery acquired a couple of years back, is op-

Wolves & Dudley: at a glance

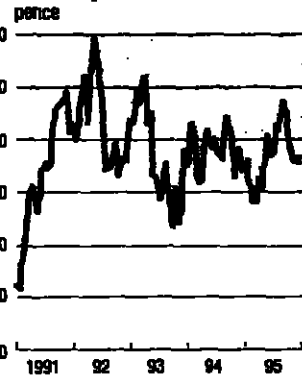
Market value: £369m, share price 551p

Trading record	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Turnover (£m)	18.8	210	224	231	237
Pre-tax profits (£m)	33.0	35.2	36.5	38.3	43.5
Earnings per share (pence)	35.5	37.2	37.2	38.5	45.6
Dividends per share (pence)	10.3	11.4	12.6	13.9	15.3

Operating margin



Share price



erating well below capacity and will lose out to its bigger rival on that patch. Vaux, unless it can acquire more houses in the area to tie into its beer sales.

All that said, Wolves is a soundly run business and the 10 per cent increase in the dividend to 15.3p confirmed its progressive dividend policy after the disappointment of the rate of growth in the payout at the half-way stage of only about 5 per cent. After yesterday's 21p rise to 551p, the shares stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of about 13. With little yield support that is high enough.

Strategic visions at Chrysalis

Chris Wright's Chrysalis is at a crucial point in its transformation from a music and television production company to an integrated media group. Given the lack of underlying operating profits in the past year, and the likelihood of at least one more year in the red, it is virtually impossible to predict how the stock will perform. The real questions are strategic and managerial.

Is the company right to move away from television facilities and aggressively into radio and film? Can it sustain the start-up costs of two new radio stations let alone finance bids for up to four new regional licences in the next year? And can the film business, where earnings can take years to generate, add value to Chrysalis's business mix?

The view in the City remains somewhat mixed, and certainly the results for the year to August gave conflicting signals. The television business is profitable, with a mix of independent production companies supplying programming to a range of UK broadcasters. Equally, the export market continues to be strong, representing £28m of the company's £57.7m turnover.

Music publishing is also performing well, but profits have been dragged down by the costs of developing Echo Records, the company's new label. Overall, pre-tax profits topped £1m in the year to August, helped by £11.5m in extraordinary gains.

Radio has been a source of big costs: £1.5m spent on the launch of the London Heart franchise alone. But radio is arguably the best strategic new road Chrysalis has ever taken. Radio's share of advertising has doubled to about 4 per cent in the past year, and the market is expected to grow by 15 per cent this year.

There are more doubts on the feature film side, but Chrysalis is in any event taking a very cautious approach. It is clearly intent on retaining its strong TV production franchise, and continuing to develop its library of music and television rights, even if it might take a bit of a flyer on film.

While future profits are hard to gauge, the current share price of 170p, down 2p on yesterday's results, looks quite attractive for those who believe in the strategic vision.

NOTICE TO INVESTORS

National & Provincial Building Society hereby gives notice that the annual rates of interest payable on the following accounts, with effect from 2 December 1995, will be as indicated below:

Name of Account	Minimum Balance	Gross Interest Rate*	Net Interest Rate**
Instant Reserve	1	1.00	0.75
Under 16s receive	250	1.25	0.93
£500 rate for	500	3.35	2.51
£1 to £500	2,500	3.50	2.62
	5,000	3.75	2.81
	10,000	4.25	3.18
	25,000	4.60	3.45
Private Reserve	500	4.00	3.00
Annual Interest	5,000	4.15	3.11
	10,000	4.85	3.63
	25,000	5.40	4.05
	50,000	5.75	4.31
	100,000	5.85	4.38
Private Reserve	500	3.93	2.94
Monthly Income	5,000	4.08	3.06
	10,000	4.75	3.56
	25,000	5.28	3.96
	50,000	5.61	4.20
	100,000	5.70	4.27
Investment Reserve	5,000	5.50	4.12
Annual Interest†	10,000	5.90	4.42
	25,000	6.20	4.65
	50,000	6.45	4.83
	100,000	6.75	5.06
Investment Reserve	5,000	5.43	4.07
Monthly Income†	10,000	5.82	4.36
	25,000	6.11	4.58
	50,000	6.35	4.76
	100,000	6.63	4.97
TESSA***	1	6.00	N/A
Annual Interest	Max Investment	6.50	N/A
TESSA***	1	5.85	N/A
Monthly Income			
M.A.X.	1	1.00	0.75
Treasurer's Reserve	1	1.75	1.31
	500	3.70	2.77
	5,000	3.95	2.96
	10,000	4.70	3.52
	25,000	5.20	3.90

*The gross interest rate shown is the rate payable without taking account of the deduction of income tax. **The net interest rate shown represents the gross interest rate after the deduction of income tax at the basic rate (currently 19%). ***Interest on TESSA accounts is exempt from income tax provided the TESSA conditions are met. †Gross interest rates quoted for investment Reserve include 1.50% gross extra interest payable on 1 June each year (or on the last day of each month for monthly income option) provided that withdrawal conditions are met and balance remains over £5,000.

All other variable rate accounts not specifically mentioned in this notice remain unchanged.

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National & Provincial Building Society
Provincial House, Bradford BD1 1NL. Telephone: 01274 734444. Fax: 01274 737918.

COMPANY RESULTS	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Aspirin Holdings (A)	30m (23.4m)	8.8m (2.1m)	31.5p (21.5p)	nd (nd)
Caterpillar (A)	9.44m (8.26m)	9.44m (10.1m)	27.4p (23.7p)	5p (5p)
Chrysalis Group (F)	67.7m (72.3m)	3m (1.5m)	2.85p (1.11p)	2.75p
Goldsmiths (A)	51.1m (41.7m)	8.2m (5.3m)	12.3p (11.6p)	3.5p (4p)
Hardwoods (A)	- (-)	0.52m (0.24m)	2.25p (1p)	1.4p (0.5p)
Hickory Products (A)	23.3m (22.4m)	3.4m (2.35m)	11.2p (8.4p)	2.1p (1.8p)
MacCarthy & Stone (F)	67.3m (71.2m)	9.2m (4.7m)	7.2p (4.7p)	2p (-)
New London Corp (A)	- (-)	1.59m (1.17m)	1.78p (1.3p)	1p (0.5p)
Reed Executive (A)	37.8m (30.8m)	2.52m (1.91m)	3.3p (2.7p)	nd (nd)
Tay Options (F)	22.6m (12.3m)	1.68m (0.83m)	7.16p (2.67p)	1.7p (nd)
W&A Brown (F)	237m (225m)	43.5m (38.3m)	45.6p (39p)	15.3p (13.9p)

(F) - First (A) - Annual (nd) - None reported

Management buys Blue Boar

The Blue Boar group of motorway service stations has been sold to its management for £25m. The deal involves three sites, including two on the M1 at Watford Gap and Rothamside near Northampton. A third is located at Annadale Water on the M74 in Scotland. The deal was led by Blue Boar's managing director, Dennis Watson, and backed by 3i, the venture capital group.

Unilever takes on Glaxo arm

Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch consumer products group, is paying £95m for the Glaxo subsidiary,

Hazeline. Hazeline is a Singapore-based consumer products group which manufactures a range of skin-care products in North and South-east Asia. Last year the division reported operating profits of £4.1m on sales of £32.5m.

Buy-in for Marilyn Foods

Marilyn Foods, the frozen food retailer, has been sold to a management buy-in for an undisclosed amount. Marilyn Foods sells gourmet frozen food products from 14 regional depots and reported sales of £16m last year. The buy-in is being led by the former director of Northern Foods, Jack Slatter.

هكذا من الأصل

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3680.4 +16.1

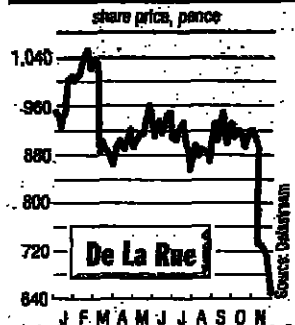
FT-SE 250
3963.7 +4.6

FT-SE 350
1821.5 +0.67

SEAQ VOLUME
863.5m shares,
31,037 bargains

Gilts Index
95.65 +0.23

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Takeover talk and rate hopes produce another record

TAKING STOCK

Another day, another record. Inspired by takeover and lower interest rate hopes leading shares ended a remarkable week in ebullient form with the FT-SE 100 index up 16.1 points at 3,680.4. Except for a modest relapse on Budget day the index has made steady progress this week, gaining 56.4 points.

But the stock market is not quite such a happy place as the rip roaring index performance might suggest. Sald one stockbroker: "98 per cent of this market is doing absolutely nothing; the other 2 per cent is going ballistic".

Certainly blue chips need interest rate cuts and at least one big takeover bid for support. The rates reduction should occur soon and, if the rumour mill was in form, the bid action should come early next week. GRE, the Guardian Royal Exchange insurance group, re-assessed its position as the market's favourite victim.

The shares outperformed other blue chips, achieving a 22p gain to 292p in unusually busy trading. BAT Industries, facing increasing tobacco problems in the US, is regarded as the most likely to strike. The insurance group is seen as an ideal add-on to BAT's already extensive financial interests which include the Eagle Star insurance business. BAT shares were unchanged at 557.5p.

But a BAT strike is not the only story circulating. A defensive merger with Legal & General, also a rumoured target, is another continuing yarn. So is a get-together with the market's leading bank bid candidate, Standard Chartered. Suggestions the long rumoured Continental insurance bid is at last about to materialise lifted some other insurers, with Royal up 17p at 400p and General Accident 18p at 683p. L&G was little changed at



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

694p; Standard, in a strong bank sector, rose a further 8p to 614p.

Other takeover favourites bounced higher, including Bank of Scotland, Royal Bank of Scotland and Asda, the supermarket chain.

Vickers, the engineering group embracing Rolls-Royce cars, was another in the bid frame with talk of a Continental strike creating the action. The shares purred 7p to 278p.

The biotech babes were again high on drugs. British Biotech, on its cancer drug, was traded at 2,625p overnight and touched 2,150p in morning trading on hopes of US buying

But the Americans failed to arrive and the shares closed at 1,675p, up 127p. There are expectations the group will produce encouraging progress reports on another drug over the weekend.

Proteas, the drug designer, rose 35p to 144p, as it announced the first of its signed deals, an income-producing licence agreement with Smith-Kline Beecham. Celltech, results on Wednesday, gained 53p to 602p and newcomer Peptide Therapeutics put on a further 13p to 251p.

MAID, the on-line information group which has just achieved a US listing, headed the hi-tech brigade, spurring

39p to 274p as it put its 100 million pages of business information on to the Internet.

CMG, a computer software group, made a bright start, placed at 290p, the shares reached 339p.

But it was not all one way traffic. BSKy8 was at one time up 27p as buyers chased shares in a narrow market. They banked on US buying following the company's inclusion in the internationally followed Morgan Stanley Capital Index and further support from the Endsleigh League deal.

But then the Office of Fair Trading intervened, deciding to review the satellite television group's sports coverage, presumably sparked off by the Endsleigh deal, and its relationship with cable channels.

In often frantic trading the shares slumped 51p and then staged a modest rally, closing 5.5p down at 428.5p. Coal Investments was an-

other casualty, crashing 21p to 35p. The shares were 119p earlier this year. CI has had to fix up new loan terms with its bankers and is preparing a rights issue, said to be at around 10p.

De La Rue, the paper and security printing group, tumbled a further 17p to 643p. The shares have crashed from a high of 1,052p this year. The group issued another profit warning this week and analysts are continuing to make negative noises.

Hannson is another to lose its appeal. Its latest results prompted a round of downgradings, lowering the shares 10.5p to 185p, lowest for three years. Pearson jumped 33p to 682p with a brace of big buyers appearing towards the close, and Grand Metropolitan slipped 3p to 439p. Its ESOP sold 51.9 million shares to SBC Warburg which, with Cazenove, placed 15.8 million at around 431p.

BTG, the old British Technology Group, gained 15p to a 703p peak as, in the heavy drug fever, the market continued to speculate about its riches, largely represented by an array of patents, licences and new products. The shares were floated at 225p in the summer.

Among the stories circulating is that BTG has clinched a licensing deal with Zeneca. It is said that the drugs giant, which yesterday launched its Diltivan intravenous anaesthetic in Japan, is taking on the marketing for a BTG cancer drug that is due to be put on sale next month.

Wrenn Co, a maker of men's clothing, jumped 19p to 143p on takeover gossip. The shares have climbed 37p this week, from a year's low of 97p. Interim figures are due soon.

SHARE PRICE DATA

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details or full rights: a full list of shares is available on request. Source: Financial Times

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Call cost 33p per minute (cheap rates), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT

MARKET LEADERS: TOP 20 VOLUMES

Share	Volume	Share	Volume	Share	Volume
Shell	75,000	British	15,000	British	15,000
Shell	75,000	British	15,000	British	15,000
Shell	75,000	British	15,000	British	15,000
Shell	75,000	British	15,000	British	15,000

FT-SE 100 INDEX HOUR BY HOUR

Open 3654.0 down 10.3	14.00 3677.0 up 12.7
08.00 3660.2 down 4.1	15.00 3672.6 up 5.3
10.00 3671.2 up 8.9	16.00 3677.5 up 8.2
	17.00 3680.4 up 16.1

RETAILERS, FOOD

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

RETAILERS, FOOD

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

RETAILERS, FOOD

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

RETAILERS, GENERAL

Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00
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Asda	290.00	Asda	290.00

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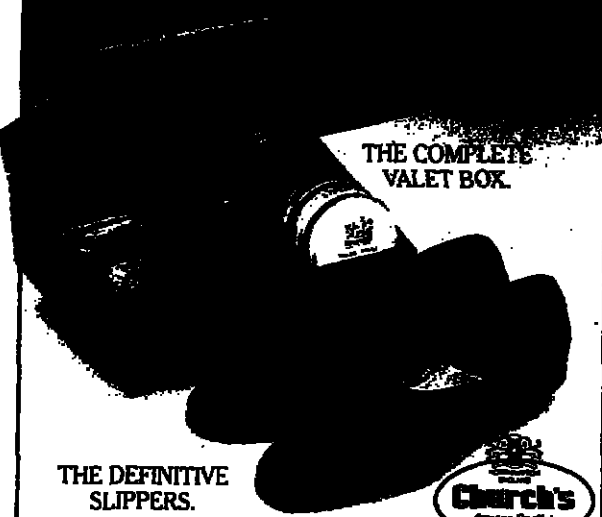
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sport

Uncertain times for England

Quite what the England selectors should do about their team to play Western Samoa on 16 December is proving more troublesome than they ever would have imagined before the defeat by South Africa exposed their idea of a new-look side playing new-look rugby.

They will meet today before the latest Samoa tour match, against the Midlands at Leicester, but when they will finally make their choice remains uncertain. In an ideal world it would have to be before the next England session at Marlow on Wednesday.

For now, though, the best they can do is add a dozen uncapped players, plus a couple of others, to join the squad – the idea being to give the young additions a taste of the big time, as such Marlow RFC on a dark winter's night can be called. Richard West, capped during the World Cup, and Steve Goss, who already knows about the big time after winning 10 caps, will also augment the 21 from the Springboks game.

This fits in with one of the constant refrains of Jack Rowell's England management: to the effect that future development, for too long neglected, must be given a priority almost as high as the England team itself.

Even so, one suspects Rowell would happily settle for a selection who can play his type of rugby in the immediate term, i.e. against the islanders. Whether this is actually possible for an English side is still an unanswered question, London having tried a form of total rugby against Samoa on Wednesday but failed due to inadequate skill levels.

Whether the Midlands – who have won both their divisional fixtures and will in effect play off for the CIS trophy against the North next Saturday – will do any better is the main point of interest in today's game. Meanwhile, the Divisional Championship's losers, London and the South-West, play the wooden- spoon match at Sunbury, leaving the North to prepare for Tuesday's encounter with the tourists at Huddersfield.

Steve Bale on the problems in Jack Rowell's quest for a new style of play

Having recovered from a shoulder injury sustained against South Africa, Tim Rodger leads the Midlands, unscathed against the Midlands at Leicester, but when they will finally make their choice remains uncertain. In an ideal world it would have to be before the next England session at Marlow on Wednesday.

Tony Underwood's chances of returning for the Five Nations Championship receded yesterday when he put back his comeback from mid-December until after Christmas. After returning from the World Cup the England wing made a pizza advert with Jonah Lomu and had a knee operation with the result that this season he has played for neither Leicester nor Newcastle, his club and new club.

"Tony is progressing very well and he's training and he's happy with the way things are going," Rob Andrew, the Newcastle supremo, said yesterday – which is a doubtful proposition given that Underwood anticipated being fit in time to face Samoa. Instead, he saw Damian Hopley make a powerful pitch against the Springboks to keep the wing position.

Andrew is also having to do without his deputy, Dean Ryan, who made his Newcastle debut against Transvaal this week but may need an operation on a calf injury depressingly similar to one in the other leg which needed surgery. At least Ryan and Underwood have plenty of time for recuperation before February/March, when they become eligible for their new employers' league run-in.

Underwood's injury is a setback, but it is not the only one. In a series of matches, including their visit to Wigan in September, they have begun brightly only to fade. "It is not a matter of fitness," says the one Englishman in tomorrow's Broncos team, Iwan Tuk. "Maybe it is our concentration."



Pain from gain: Pete Sampras is treated after his victory in yesterday's Davis Cup final. Photograph: Grigory Dukor/Reuters

Exhausting victory for Sampras

Tennis

Pete Sampras had to be carried off court suffering from cramp after an exhausting five-set victory against Andrei Chesnokov in the opening match of the Davis Cup final in Moscow yesterday.

The opening day ended with the United States and Russia tied at 1-1 after Yevgeny Kafelnikov had beaten Jim Courier in straight sets.

Sampras, the world No1 and Wimbledon champion, defeated the 90th-ranked Chesnokov 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-7, 6-4. With his injured team-mate, Andre Agassi, among the spectators, Sampras threw his arms in the air to celebrate his victory but then collapsed with cramp. Two team trainers helped him up and carried him off the court.

Chesnokov, who won Russia's hearts with a dazzling win over Germany's Michael Stich in the semi-final, drew first blood on the slow clay court, breaking Sampras's serve twice to take the first set.

But Sampras, who said before the game he would have to be patient and aggressive to win, recovered from the second and third sets.

Sampras, winning many points with lightning long shots, advanced to the net more than his 29-year-old opponent but committed nearly twice as many unforced errors.

The 24-year-old American, who is more at home on faster courts, landed only about half his first serves in.

The match looked to be over with Sampras 4-2 up in the fourth set but the dogged Russian broke back and won the tie-break 7-5.

Chesnokov came within inches of winning what turned out to be a crucial sixth game of the final set, forcing Sampras to five deuces before the American saved the game.

Sampras promptly broke the Russian's serve and went on to win 6-4. At the end, Chesnokov threw down his racket in disgust.

Despite Kafelnikov's 7-6, 7-5, 6-3 victory, he and Courier looked evenly matched – trading powerful shots in a series of long rallies which delighted the near-capacity crowd in the Olympic Stadium.

Kafelnikov took time to settle in the first set, double-faulting three times, before convincingly winning a tie-break 7-1.

The second set went with serve to 6-5 until Courier dropped his service after the Russian initially squandered two set points.

Courier trailed 3-0 in the third, broke back to 3-2 but eventually lost 6-3.

Kafelnikov and Andrei Olkhovsky face Richey Reneberg, a late call-up after Agassi withdrew, and Todd Martin in today's doubles.

Refined style takes Price out into the lead

Golf

Nick Price shot a best of the day 67 at Sun City yesterday to lead the Million Dollar Challenge at the half-way stage while the defending champion, Nick Faldo, struggled home in 78 – his worst round of the year.

Faldo had one of the most remarkable rounds of his career, going out in a nine-over-par 45

but shooting three under for the back nine. His troubles began when he hit two balls in the green-side lake at the par-three fourth for a quadruple-bogey seven. He then took a seven at the par-four eighth.

"The strange thing was I wasn't hitting the ball that badly," said Faldo, who finished 12 shots adrift of Price. "But the rough is so bad this week that if you're 10 feet off line you have

no shot. I had four weeks off before this tournament and I feel I'm hitting my irons as well as at any time in my career," Price said.

Price bogeyed the first hole but then on played an error-free game to build a lead of three shots over Corey Pavin, Tom Lehman and Bernhard Langer. He was out in level par but stormed home in 31 with five birdies, including three in the

last four holes. "I've made a few swing refinements and I feel I'm hitting my irons as well as at any time in my career," Price said.

The joint overnight leader Pavin shot a 72, one better than Sam Torrance who dropped to two under. Torrance spoiled his round with a seven at the par five ninth – the hole he eagled on his way to the joint lead on Thursday.

After a 69, the second best

round of the day, Langer said he did not think Price's three-shot lead was significant. "You can lose three shots on one hole the way the course is set up," he said.

Ernie Els remained in contention after a second successive 72 – six behind Price. He was critical of the difficult pin positions. "With the rough up they should put the pins in easier places. The crowd don't want to see us struggling out there," he said.

Craig Parry took advantage of receptive greens to shoot a six-under-par 67 for a one-shot lead after two rounds of the Lakes Norman Classic at The Lakes course, Sydney. Parry led with 132, but he was overshadowed by the 28-year-old Frenchman, Jean-Louis Guespy, with 10-under-par course record 63 to move up to second place.

Scores, Sporting Digest, page 27

Fans learn cost of Newlove

St Helens fans will have their first sight of Paul Newlove in their colours tomorrow, but they will have to pay more for the privilege. Saints have put up their adult ground admission by £1 to £7, starting with the game against Workington Town that marks the debut of the world's most expensive player.

Their chief executive, David Howes, said that the increase was needed in order to help pay for Newlove, who will be left centre after taking off a back injury.

Andy Northey will be his centre partner, with Chris Toyt returning after the flu that caused him to miss Wednesday night's defeat at Sheffield.

London Broncos need to solve the mystery of their

Dave Hadfield previews the debut of rugby league's most expensive player

inability to sustain their devastating start to matches if they are to live with Wigan at Bradford. Tomorrow's last match at Griffin Park before the permanent move to The Valley gives London the chance to garner more credibility – but only if they can keep going for the full 80 minutes.

In a series of matches, including their visit to Wigan in September, they have begun brightly only to fade. "It is not a matter of fitness," says the one Englishman in tomorrow's Broncos team, Iwan Tuk. "Maybe it is our concentration."

team of Dean Bell and Hugh McGahan.

There will be five teenagers, including the twins, Anthony and David Gibbons, in the backs at Halifax tomorrow. Tony Kemp returns after injury and another of their young players, Jamie Field, makes his full debut in the second row.

"We know that we have to make changes and we are looking for players, both here and overseas," said McGahan. "We will not tolerate the holiday atmosphere that is here any longer."

Warrington, at home to inform Sheffield Eagles, will have Greg Mackey in for the injured Mike Ford and will be without

Offiah pleased pressure is off

Martin Offiah is glad to be rid of the world record price tag he has carried for nearly four years.

Wigan's wing was a £440,000 buy for the champions from Widnes in January 1992 but that fee was surpassed this week when the "fast centre", Paul Newlove, joined St Helens from Bradford.

While Wigan's payment was all cash, Saints paid Bradford £250,000 but also gave them three players in part payment for Newlove, making the whole transfer deal worth around £500,000.

Offiah, who is just three tries away from a rugby league career total of 400, admits there is "a lot of pressure" in being the most expensive player in the game.

"Paul Newlove can have [the record], I think it's a weight off my shoulders," he said.

The 28-year-old England and Great Britain wing said: "Fortunately for me, when I first came to Wigan it was not really a problem as things went so well for me."

Offiah was certainly an instant hit in his first few months at Central Park, underlining his reputation as one of the world's greatest try scorers with 30 in his first 16 games for Wigan.

He scored five in the Challenge Cup semi-final thrashing of Bradford, went on to win the Lance Todd Trophy at Wembley with two tries, and also touched down 10 times in the Premiership semi-final of Leeds.

"When you do things like that, it helps alleviate the pressure but the pressure's always there because the next thing is you have a few injuries, things do not go well and the price tag comes coming out," he said.

Regarding the Newlove deal, he said: "It's good for rugby league and I think it's in the interests of both clubs to have a world record fee involved."

"It makes St Helens look as if they are moving heaven and earth to get the top players. And it consoles the Bradford supporters to know that if you must lose someone, at least you've lost them for more than any other player has gone for."

"Newlove is a very good player and I think probably the only English player who can command that sort of money."

RACING RESULTS

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Osborne to cash in on jockey scarcity

Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON

It has long been a part of the fabric on the flat, but jockey power arrived in earnest for the boys of the muddy season this week. Long-term injuries to Norman Williamson and Adrian Maguire have not only gnawed away at the number of top-shelf riders, they have also freed battalions of runners from leading trainers Kim Bailey and David Nicholson.

This has meant good news for the jockeys' room and, not least

of all, Richard Dunwoody, Jamie Osborne and Graham Bradley, the leading men at the reins of the reserve of spare riders. All three have risen above the station of forelock-tugging this week as gangs of trainers approached them for their services. The single figure who has thumbed his nose most blatantly has been Osborne, who had tea and a drink on the flat on Monday, but later the same day told the trainer he would not let his boot into the saddle at the

weekend. (It is not reported whether Nicholson wanted to put his own boot after this event.) It takes a brave man to cross the champion trainer, and Osborne clearly sees a long-term association with the animal he does ride this afternoon, Master Oats. The Gold Cup winner's regular jockey, Williamson, is out after a fall at Sedgemoor which was accompanied by the sort of obvious pain normally noted in the graphics of a Batman fight sequence.

While the Irishman waits for a mangled right leg to heal, Osborne will ride up to, and possibly including, next year's Festival. His first appointment with the nine-year-old looks a tricky one. In Chepstow's Rehearsal Chase, Master Oats has to give 12lb to Bradbury Star and two stones to Katabatic, and there are not many motor cars who can do that.

Nevertheless, Master Oats (2.05) may be up to it. According to Kim Bailey, the chestnut's best run last year, considering the weight and ground conditions, was the only one he did not win.

his final effort in the Grand National. The exciting deduction he has drawn is that the Gold Cup winner may still be improving. At Sandown, Osborne's reject, Viking Flagship, will not have to have improved to win the Tingle Creek Chase. But whether the two-mile fencing champion is a race fit enough for the job is a different matter. If he falls any way short of peak condition, there will be an opening for the impressive Ascot winner Sonad Man (2.00), the Irish-trained mount of Dunwoody.

What should have been another informative race, the Hattons Grace Hurdle at Fairyhouse tomorrow, has been neutered by the withdrawal of Montelado. The only horse to have won consecutive races at the Festival (he captured the first event, the bumper, in 1992 and the Supreme Novice Hurdle, which opened the following year's meeting), Pat Flynn's gelding has spent much of the last three seasons in the doctor's waiting room. He has brought with him just about every prob-

lem bar having a saucerpan jammed over his head and now misses a bill-stickered encounter with Michael Hourigan's Dorcas Pride. "Montelado had a slightly runny nose and I had him scuffed before declaration time and they found a little mucus in his lungs," Flynn reported. "I'm disappointed as he was in superb shape, but if he ran it may have put him back a month or six weeks. The only races that matter are the Irish and English Champion Hurdles and if he had to go for them without a run it wouldn't bother me."

The Italian reaches the landmark on Caples (3.25 nap) in a mould-breaking event for Britain. The Wulfrun Stakes at Dunstable Park is the first Listed race to be run on the all-weather in this country and has attracted an uncommonly useful field of the man-made surface. Perhaps they are getting in practice for the 1996 Breeders' Cup.

While Montelado may be used sparingly the same has not been true of Lanesboro Dettori, who clocks up his 1,000th ride of the year at Wolverhampton this afternoon. "The Italian reaches the landmark on Caples (3.25 nap) in a mould-breaking event for Britain. The Wulfrun Stakes at Dunstable Park is the first Listed race to be run on the all-weather in this country and has attracted an uncommonly useful field of the man-made surface. Perhaps they are getting in practice for the 1996 Breeders' Cup."

Lonesome has friends

Lonesome Glory is to be aimed at the Gold Cup at Cheltenham in March after humping three rivals on his British debut at Sandown yesterday. The top American steeplechase forged clear of Egypt Mill Prince on the run-in, beating Jenny Pitman's runner by 11 lengths with King Credo third and the former two-mile champion, Remittance Man, fourth.

The seven-year-old jumped Sandown's stiff fences in style for his regular rider, Blythe Miller, the woman jockey who is the reigning US champion. Lonesome Glory's new trainer, Charlie Brooks, said that the horse would be entered for the Gold Cup (40-1 with William Hill), though a different target at the Festival has not been ruled out.

WILLIAM HILL HANDICAP 10-YEAR-OLD

Fate of the favourites:	1986	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94
	7	5	1	3	F	1	3	1	3	12
Winner's place in betting:	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
Starting-prize:	16-1	16-1	8-4	9-2	12-1	11-4	7-1	5-4	12-2	4-5
Age:	7	7	5	9	4	5	5	5	6	5
Weight:	10-8	11-7	10-5	10-2	10-10	10-12	10-4	10-2	11-2	10-2
Faults or loss to 5X winner: Favourite's	+20.30 Second favourite: £4.50									
Percentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last races:	30%									
Shortest-priced winner:	4-5/16-6/4									
Longest-priced winner:	Chrysler 16-1 (1989), Antech 16-1 (1989)									
Top mare: M. de Loup (1989), 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 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Profit or loss to £1.50. Forecast: 1.0-2.0. Second Forecast: 1.0-2.0. Percentage of winners placed last, 2nd or 3rd in last race: 30%.

Shortest-priced winner: 1.0-2.0. Second Forecast: 1.0-2.0. Longest-priced winner: 1.0-2.0. Second Forecast: 1.0-2.0. Top trainer: M. P. O'Connell (1996), L. J. O'Connell (1995), R. J. O'Connell (1994), T. J. O'Connell (1993), P. J. O'Connell (1992), D. J. O'Connell (1991), J. O'Connell (1990), K. O'Connell (1989), L. O'Connell (1988), M. O'Connell (1987), N. O'Connell (1986), O. O'Connell (1985), F. O'Connell (1984), G. O'Connell (1983), H. O'Connell (1982), I. O'Connell (1981), J. O'Connell (1980), K. O'Connell (1979), L. O'Connell (1978), M. O'Connell (1977), N. O'Connell (1976), O. O'Connell (1975), F. O'Connell (1974), G. O'Connell (1973), H. O'Connell (1972), I. O'Connell (1971), J. O'Connell (1970), K. O'Connell (1969), L. O'Connell (1968), M. O'Connell (1967), N. O'Connell (1966), O. O'Connell (1965), F. O'Connell (1964), G. O'Connell (1963), H. O'Connell (1962), I. O'Connell (1961), J. O'Connell (1960), K. O'Connell (1959), L. O'Connell (1958), M. O'Connell (1957), N. 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sport

Bonetti discovers paradise after Juventus

Glenn Moore talks to an Italian import sampling life in glamorous Grimsby

There he was, the Serie A star, a man who had played in a European Cup final and shared a dressing room with Michel Platini, Paolo Rossi and Gianluca Vialli. Now he was getting changed in the laundry room at Blundell Park, home of the not-quite-so-world famous Grimsby Town.

Bonetti's presence at Grimsby is remarkable in itself. What makes it barely believable is that he is paying £50,000 of his own money for the privilege.

Talking to Bonetti yesterday, as he cheerfully pulled his training kit on amid the washing machines and tumble dryers, one had to ask him: where did it all go wrong? The answer, delivered with the aid of his interpreter and cousin, Dario Magri, is that nothing has gone wrong. He loves it in Grimsby, so much so he has turned down the chance of a lucrative move to Japan.

Such is his desire to play here today despite being thrown through the windscreen in a head-on car crash while visiting Italy in midweek. "He was so lucky," Magri said. "The cars were written off." Incredibly Bonetti suffered only mild cuts and bruising to his forehead.

Bonetti's affection for Grimsby is reciprocated. Blundell Park will be sold out today for a match which would normally attract 4,500. Instead they were queuing on Monday to be among the 8,500 capacity crowd. Five hundred of those supporters, judging by this week's sales, will be waving an Italian flag, a similar number will be wearing shirts with "Bonetti" on the back. "It is incredible for me,"



Ivano Bonetti, the former Genoa, Juventus, Sampdoria and Torino player, makes himself at home in the Grimsby Town laundry room

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

Bonetti said. "For 15 years in Italy I played alongside big-name foreign players, now I find I am the big-name foreigner in a town which did not know I existed two months ago."

"It is a special situation here. I am abroad and doing well for a team which has not done anything for a long time. At 31, I am still achieving something. There are goals to pursue here just as there were at Juventus. They are simply smaller goals."

After he scored the winner against West Bromwich a fortnight ago, Bonetti said: "He did a lap of honour. He blew kisses to each stand in turn and hugged his translator, all this while the ref is waiting to restart the game. At the end he did another lap of honour with all the mascots bowing

and scraping the ground around him. On the pitch he is a mercurial player. "He is unpredictable,"

Flowers said. "He drifts in and out of the game a bit, and plays all over the place. Laws has done well, he had the bottle to play him, and he has the gumption to let him do what he wants. "He has qualities you rarely see in this league," said Swain,

the assistant manager. "He is technically good, confident with the ball at his feet and

stops the game. Grimsby play good football, not long-ball, there is a lot of first-time passing. Italian football has a lot of skill and technique, but it can be too slow. It also lacks honesty, there are many tricks."

Bonetti's CV reads like a Serie A fixture list. After beginning with his home town, Brescia, he joined Genoa, then Juventus. The then 20-year-old found it difficult to gain a regular place - "I was competing with Platini for the same position," he said ruefully - and moved to Atlanta. From there he went to Bologna, then Sampdoria, with whom he played in the 1992 European Cup final against Barcelona at Wembley. Last year he played alongside Andrea Silenzi, now of Nottingham Forest, at Torino. He then decided he wanted to play abroad, probably Japan,

where he knew Kazu Miura, formerly of Genoa. Torino agreed to release him from his contract on condition he did not go to another Italian club and the rights to his "services and image" were sold to an American management company.

While waiting to go to Japan in January, he thought he would try his luck in England. "Brian and I were looking for a left-sided attacking midfielder and we went to see him in a reserve match at Aston Villa. While there I met Sir Ian I. knew from my Villa days who said they had just such a player looking for a club."

"Ivano came up to play in a reserve game, Brian put it about the press, and we had 2,000 turn up. I thought: 'We're on to something here'."

Bonetti's arrival galvanised the team to such effect that they have moved into third place. However, there was a snag. The company owning Bonetti wanted to be paid for his hire, Grimsby are not flush with money and, even if they were, under FIA regulations they were not allowed to deal with the company.

Last week, Swain brokered a deal. Bonetti, eager to stay, put up £50,000 and Grimsby promised they could persuade the community to match it. If the Ivano Bonetti Fund raises the money by the end of this month, his loan will be secured for the rest of the season. After that, no one knows. To buy him permanently would cost £250,000, money Grimsby do not have. But if the unthinkable happened, and they won promotion, surely they would find the cash somewhere.

It is not inconceivable: Bonetti is not the only good player. Young defenders Gary Croft and Peter Handyside are regularly wanted by Premiership sides. Jamie Forrester, chief of Leeds and Arsenal, is reviving his career in attack. Alongside him is Steve Livingstone, formerly of Chelsea, Blackburn and Coventry and, at £140,000, Grimsby's record buy.

"When I came here I said I was not prepared to sit in the middle of the division," Laws said. "We are looking to go up. If we did, the TV money is worth £5-7m, which gives us a chance of having a go at staying there."

And if they did go up, could Bonetti persuade his former Sampdoria team-mate and good friend Vialli to join him?

"He loves English football and he loves the idea of coming to play in England," Bonetti said. "But a lot depends on the Champions' League. His contract ends this year and if Juventus win that, he may get some very good offers."

Would Vialli also be prepared to pay his own money to play in England? The suggestion brings much laughter from Bonetti and Magri before Bonetti said: "For sure - it would not be so much of an effort for him to do so."

Newspapers are screaming. But in Grimsby, they are in fantasy-land already. Last week, regular crowd from Lancaster only to find she could not get in. Flowers said: "Two to three thousand were turned away. This is unheard of at Grimsby. I am just enjoying it while it lasts."

Rangers rely on youth

Scottish football

Rangers can recall a glittering array of talent to play alongside Paul Gascoigne for tomorrow's visit to Hearts, yet the 18-year-old Brian McGinlay may still retain his place in midfield.

McGinlay made his first appearance of the season in last Saturday's 4-1 win over Hibernian at Easter Road and, despite squad recalls for Brian Laudrup, Stuart McCall and David Robertson, McGinlay may yet make the starting line-up.

"It is the second leg of a difficult away double for us but we want to carry on where we left off at Easter Road," Walter Smith, their manager, said.

Kilmarnock's Gary Holt, who spent a frustrating time kicking his heels at Parkhead after being signed by the then manager, Lou Macari, returns there today hoping to haunt Celtic.

Holt was prevented from playing a competitive game for Celtic for a year after signing by an SFA ruling, because he had bought himself out of the army.

"Gary has impressed me in recent reserve games, so he is in the team to play Celtic," his manager, Alex Totten, said.

Celtic trail Rangers by four points and their manager, Tommy Burns, facing his old club, is looking to regain the form shown in last week's impressive 3-1 home win over Hearts.

Motherwell's recent run is reaching crisis point as they take on the injury-hit Hibernian at Fir Park without a win in their last seven league games.

Partick will be without the injured goalkeeper, Nicky Walker, when they face the Coca-Cola Cup winners Aberdeen, complete with new signing Dean Windass, at Firhill. Scott Booth and Theo Snelders will not travel with Roy Aitken's squad.

Raid goes to Falkirk with Jimmy Nicholl, Premier Division manager of the month, adding the Bristol City full-back Mark Humphries to his squad. But Nicholl has failed in an attempt to sign the Bosnia striker, Dino Vukotic, with Raid being refused a work permit because his international record does not measure up.

Aberdeen win the race to sign Windass

GUY HODGSON

Fresh from becoming the first British team to qualify for Europe next season, Aberdeen, last weekend's Scottish Coca-Cola Cup winners, ripped in ahead of Everton and Norwich City yesterday to sign Hull City's striker, Dean Windass, for £700,000. A previous cross-border raid by the Dons took the Oldham midfielder Paul Bernard to Pittodrie for £1m.

Windass, 26, has scored eight goals this season for Hull, the Second Division's bottom team, but the club's financial problems, which have threatened their existence, forced them to sell.

Non-League North Ferriby United are also richer for the deal. Windass joined Hull from the Northern Counties East Premier Division side with a self-on clause of 10 per cent.

Wolves, who are looking for a replacement for Graham Taylor, yesterday said they had been refused permission to speak to Leicester's Mark McGhee. However, the Leicester chairman, Martin George, denied there had been any

move, much to the surprise of Tom Finn, the Wolves secretary. "Mr Jonathan Hayward, our chairman, reported to me last night that he had just spoken to Mr George to request permission to speak to Mark McGhee and had been refused," Finn said.

The takeover of Sheffield United is not cut and dried after all. A club statement said that negotiations between the potential buyers, Mike McDonald and Martin Burke, and the controlling share holder, Reg Brealey, had stalled.

Colin Cooper, the Nottingham Forest defender, escaped with a censure and a warning about his future conduct from the Football Association for a rude gesture at The Dell on the opening day of the season.

Bolton's hopes of signing Newcastle's Scott Sellers for £800,000 in time for today's Premiership match with Nottingham Forest have been dashed. They have yet to settle personal terms. Manchester United yesterday blocked a move demanding price cuts next season by telling shareholders at their AGM that there would be a review of the club's admission costs in the spring.

Kinnear dreams of repeating Newcastle's title tumble

Phil Shaw looks at the portents in this weekend's Premiership programme

scars which festered until the spring. Hence the Geordie joy, tempered with relief, that Kevin Keegan's team held their nerve during November this time.

Joe Kinnear, the Dons' manager, would have been entitled to a wry smile at the way Liverpool sought to probe Newcastle's alleged lack of pace in central defence with Wimbledon-style long balls over the top in Wednesday's Coca-Cola Cup tie. He also knows only too well that the covering speed of Warren Barton, whom he sold to Keegan in the summer, is as good an insurance against such a threat as money can buy.

Even if the occasion tricks Vinnie Jones and Co into rekindling the Crazy Gang spirit, it may not be enough to stop a side bursting with confidence after 12 wins and two draws since their blip at Southampton. Manchester United can close the gap to two points by beating

Chelsea today. In terms of the clubs' relative standings, not to mention United's recent 4-1 win at Stamford Bridge, it looks a formality. However, several factors make Alex Ferguson wary, not least Chelsea's remarkable record of just two defeats in their last 20 trips to Old Trafford.

The absence of Peter Schmeichel, which means a first Premiership start for Kevin Pilkington, may also sow doubts in United's minds. Pilkington, a 21-year-old from Hitchin who last played in the 3-0 home defeat by York in the Coca-Cola Cup, has the unenviable task of stopping Mark Hughes from adding to the goal he scored in his first reunion with United.

Hughes, recalling that it was the first time he had ever been cheered by both sets of fans, referred to "both challengers" for the championship. It is too early to write off any of the pursuing pack, although increasingly it looks as if it would take an extraordinary run to prevent a carve-up between the Uniteds.

Two of their number, Aston Villa and Arsenal, meet head on, with Villa a vastly different proposition to the side who surrendered 4-0 at home to the post-Grabiner, pre-Rioch Gunners in April. Brian Little was too negative in his tactical approach at Highbury in October, and will be keen to redress the balance at the expense of one of his closest friends.

Tottenham, now up to fifth, also have a score to settle from April - namely the 4-1 thumping Everton gave them in the FA Cup semi-final - while Liverpool entertain Southampton urgently needing to end a run of five defeats and a draw.

The last team they beat, Manchester City, have hardly looked back since. They go to Leeds with 10 points from four matches that this week earned Alan Ball the season's most unexpected Manager of the Month award.

FAN'S EYE VIEW

No 126
Kingstonian
Mark Murphy

Slough denied them in 1985, 1990 and 1991. So when Welling succumbed in 1992, the explosion of emotion was understandable, if occasionally bordering on the illegal.

The Peterborough tie in the competition proper was a new experience to all but the oldest Ks fans - and they got great press out of it, with their "patient passing game" and "dead fly" goal celebration. Although the Peterborough fans' view that the game was a tedious masterclass they should have won in the last minute was probably nearer the mark.

Alas, Ks lost their captain, centre-half and top goalscorer to injury and manager Chris Kelly (so that's what happened to him) quipped that if the Pope or the Archbishop of Canterbury rang up they'd get a game. Yet salvation did come from above - a 50p coin-braining Ks goalkeeper Adrian Blake with Ks three down after an hour and bound for humiliation. Ks reached humiliation (9-1, if you must ask) - but without their stricken keeper. And, with the FA in barnstorm mode, a behind-closed-doors replay was ordered.

Kelly was rightly contemptuous of the decision and interpreted "club officials" as loosely as FA regulations permitted when allocating passes for the match. In such familiar surroundings, with two of the injured back in the side, Ks lost only 1-0.

An improbable win at Dover last year set Ks up at home to struggling Brighton. In a game as dramatic as Peterborough had been dull, two Jamie Ndah goals saw them off. One was a 20-yard overhead spectacular, denied "Goal of the Month" status by some Matt Le Tissier tap-in.

Our second-round pairing with fellow Isthmians Aylesbury was an anti-climax: we were fated to lose, and which inflicted the duck walk on an underserving football fraternity.

So this year we're getting

greedy - and blasé. There was more concern about the first round in the bar than first round opponents after the final qualifying round win over Tower Bridge. That first-round game was only treated like the 5-1 win over Eastern League opponents that it was. Now expectations have radically altered.

"Doing ourselves justice" against League opposition used to mean a draw or narrow defeat. This year, we believe we have a chance. True, Plymouth are well-versed in the art of beating teams at our level, but now we've been there and done it. With this year's Ks team the best for some time, there's a new perspective on doing ourselves justice.

In 1992, one Ks fan commented: "I could get used to this." Well, we all have now, and we're loving every minute.

TEAM NEWS

Aston Villa v Arsenal
Aston Villa are hoping Townsend (right instep injury) will be fit. If he is ruled out, Staunton is likely to deputise. Draper, Moseley and Charles are all expected to shake off minor knocks. Bergkamp has a calf muscle injury and may miss his first game for Arsenal since his transfer from Inter Milan. He is expected to start in the midfield role.

Blackburn v West Ham
New Swedish striker Gudmundsson is in the Blackburn squad but is considered an unlikely starter because of his lack of match fitness. Borisen is expected to replace McGinlay in midfield. Defender Martin is ruled out by a hamstring injury, so West Ham reshuffle their back four. Breackie comes in at right-back, Potts switches to centre back and Dicks, back after suspension, takes over from the injured Rowland at left-back.

Bolton v Nottingham Forest
Bolton, with a depleted squad, are said to be looking to complete the signing of Newcastle midfielder Stephen Hendrie. Lee and Stubbs are injured, while Patterson is serving a three-match suspension. Sneekes replaces Patterson. Forest have been hit by flu, with Silvert and Bart-Williams among the ill. Halstead takes over in defence from the suspended Christie while manager Clark hopes striker Lee (thigh) will be fit.

Leeds v Manchester City
The Swedish striker Brodeur is set for his home league debut. Defenders Penberthy and Johnson are available again but Palmer impressed in midweek and manager Wilkinson may name an unchanged side. "The King" or Ball has earned an unchanged City side following the run of three wins and a draw.

Liverpool v Southampton
Southampton's goalkeeper (groin) as Liverpool expect to avoid losing four successive home games at Anfield. Liverpool's first team since 1923. The suspended defender, Christian Zende, is a recall for Southampton. Striker, Neil and Bennett, who have late fitness tests and defender Nelson (groin) could return.

Manchester United v Chelsea
Chelsea's elbow injury means that reserve goalkeeper Aldington comes in. United are also without suspended midfielder Keane and Butt. Chelsea's Johnson starts a three-match suspension, so Sinclair is set to deputise. Guite is in the squad but is again rated a doubtful starter with a calf injury.

QPR v Middlesbrough
Hawley could make his full debut for QPR. Top scorer Higgins has recovered from an ankle injury and is expected to return to Middlesbrough. Ulfy player Blackmore has been added to the squad.

Tottenham v Everton
Tottenham are expected to be unchanged as they bid to maintain their league position. The top of the table. Everton will have Anagnostis leading their attack in place of the injured Rideout. Home has failed to regain his place in midfield.

Wimbledon v Newcastle
Wimbledon's injury list is shortening with Cunningham and Ardley competing for places. Newcastle expect their leading scorer Ferdinand to be fit after taking a knock in midweek. Otherwise manager Keegan can field an unchanged side.

Donald triggers England collapse

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